

WITH THE CHITRAL RELIEF  
FORCE.

BY

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WITH THE FORCE FOR  
THE "ENGLISHMAN," "TIMES OF INDIA,"  
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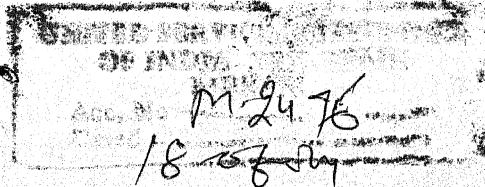
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A narrative compiled from letters written to the  
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during the Chitral Campaign to which have been add-  
ed Supplementary Notes and Criticisms.

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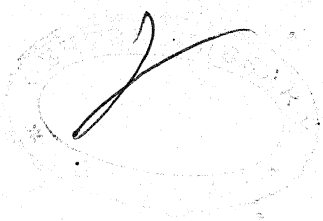


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WITH EVERY GOOD WISH TO THOSE  
FELLOW-CORRESPONDENTS WHOSE LETTERS HAVE AIDED  
ME IN THE WRITING OF THIS NARRATIVE.





## PREFACE.

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I have little to add in the way of an introduction. I can only say that the first 170 pages of my work represent incidents of which I was an eye-witness. The rest I have compiled, in part from letters by fellow-correspondents. I would like to state here how grateful I am to General Sir Robert Low and all the Officers of the Force for the courtesy which was shown to me throughout my sojourn at the front.

LIONEL JAMES.

VIOLET HILL, }  
*Simla, June 1895.* }



The following is the full detail of the troops comprising the Relief Force.

GENERAL KINLOCH.

1ST INFANTRY BRIGADE.

1st Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps.—Col. McCull.

1st Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment.—Col. Paterson.

15th (Sikh) Bengal Infantry.—Major Hadow.

37th (Dogra) Bengal Infantry.—Col. Mills.

No. 1 British Field Hospital.

„ 14 Native „ „

GENERAL WATERFIELD:

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE.

1st Battalion, Gordon Highlanders.—Col. Mathias.

2nd „ King's Own Scottish Borderers.—Col. Dixon.

4th Sikh Infantry.—Col. Dempster.

Guides Infantry.—Col. Battye.

No. 2 British Field Hospital.

„ 35 Native „ „

GENERAL GATACRE.

3RD INFANTRY BRIGADE.

2nd Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders.—Col. Hughes-Hallet.

1st Battalion East Kent Regiment.—Col. Harley.

25th (Punjab) Bengal Infantry.—Col. Smyth.

2nd Battalion, 4th Gurkha Rifles.—Col. Sir Charles Leslie.

No. 8 British Field Hospital.

„ 19 Native „ „

DIVISIONAL TROOPS.

Guides Cavalry.—Capt. Adams.

11th Bengal Lancers.—Col. Scott.

13th Bengal Infantry.—Col. Bingham.

23rd Pioneers.—Major Jones. *Col. Gordon.*

No. 3 Mountain Battery, Royal Artillery.—Major Cunningham.

No. 8 Mountain Battery, Royal Artillery.—Major Shiress.

No. 2 (Derajat) Mountain Battery—Capt. Parker.

No. 1 Company Bengal Sappers and Miners.

„ 4 „ „ „ „

„ 6 „ „ „ „

Engineer Field Park, from Roorkee.

No. 4 British Field Hospital, A and B Sections.

Nos. 17 and 18 Native Field Hospitals.

Veterinary Field Hospital No. 1 from Rawal Pindi.

GENERAL HAMMOND.

LINE OF COMMUNICATION TROOPS.

1st Battalion, East Lancashire Regiment. *Col Little*

29th (Punjab) Bengal Infantry. *Col Reid*

30th (Punjab) „ „ *Major Harvey*

„ 4 British Field Hospital, C and D Sections.

„ 24 Native Field Hospital.

Nos. 5 and 6 British Field Hospitals { For sick and  
„ 28 and 29 Native „ „ { wounded re-  
turning from  
the front.

## WITH THE CHITRAL RELIEF FORCE.

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The most remarkable feature in the infancy of the Chitral Field Force was the extraordinary secrecy with which the whole campaign was planned and arranged. The despatch of the expedition was determined upon late in January, the tabular plan of campaign was prepared in the Intelligence Office, except for a few minor details, by the middle of February, and then even none of the officers chosen to fill the senior offices were warned; but the whole affair was maintained as a profound secret until it was finally decided that no change in the course of events could prevent the expedition from being sent forward. In fact the General Officer who was to command the Division, of which the expedition was composed was not warned until well into March, and the Commissariat and Transport Officers did not receive their orders to proceed to the front until the 17th, that is, 14 days before the force was dated to cross the

frontier. The public had the news on the 18th through the public press, though rumours that an expedition was on foot had been communicated from the frontier a few days previously. The fact that only eight days elapsed from the date of making the expedition and its object known to the public, to the date upon which the line from Peshawar to Pindi was closed to public traffic, shows what confidence was placed in the completeness of the new mobilisation scheme.

Personally my orders reached me on the 20th, and though I read in the papers that the force would start across the frontier by the 1st April, yet knowing the elasticity of such orders in the general sense, I was not in any particular hurry to make my way to the front, believing that the force could not possibly be moved at such short notice. But an interview which I had with a senior officer in the Adjutant General's Office undeceived me, and luckily I started at once for Nowshera. Throughout the railway journey we picked up officers ordered to the front, and arrived at Nowshera to find the usually quiet little cantonment a chaos of military equipment. General Sir Robert Low the General Officer commanding the expedition had already arrived with his staff, and had taken up his quarters in a small bungalow belonging to the P.W.D.

For the first few days the railway station was the centre of all news, as it was the only place open to the public where decent meals could be procured. Here



quite a large party of officers gathered daily, and from here my first letters were written.

*Camp, Hoti Mardan, March 26th.*

Up to date the greatest uncertainty prevails as to what plan of operations the General will ultimately settle upon. Two days ago it was rumoured that two brigades would push forward at once; yesterday's camp rumour said only one, and this was later authenticated when it was positively given out that the 1st Brigade was to march in light order, that is, with a 40lb. kit. As a matter of fact, work as they will, there will not be transport and food for two brigades to move off on the first; but in three days the Commissariat will have 20 days' rations for one brigade in the second-class divisional dépôt at Jallala, our last post on this side of the frontier. This important fact points to to-day's rumour being correct. And if one brigade is to move off at once, it now remains a question for speculation which is to make the start. The road from Mardan to Nowshera is in fair condition, especially when one takes into consideration the rain and the constant traffic by Commissariat convoys which are streaming in the sixteen miles which separates Mardan from the base. But the road towards Jallala, though at present fair, will be almost impassable after one brigade with guns and transport has passed over it. The 23rd Pioneers are at present at work upon the road.

In Lower India one always hears of the frontier stations as little parched up dust-holes; but the visitor to Mardan at this time of the year is pleasantly un-

deceived, for Mardan is one of the greenest and most charming spots in India : a regular *oasis* in the desert. It is the permanent station of the Queen's own Regiment of Guides, and they could hardly have a more pleasant station, short of the Hills. I cannot pass by without making mention of the gardens and flowers : even at this time of the year, when India for the most part is commencing to parch up and dry away preparatory to the hot weather ; the gardens here are as fresh and full of flowers as India in the rains. Moreover Mardan is a place of archæological interest, some of the relics of Buddhist pageantry, in the possession of the officers of the Guides, being of the greatest value and interest. But at the present moment there are matters at Mardan of greater interest than flowers and archæological *bric-a-brac*. It is a first-class advanced Commissariat *depôt*, and the centre maidan is piled with pyramids of rice and gram sacks, which are daily increasing as the convoys stream in from the base below. A second-class advanced *depôt* has been pushed forward to Jallala, and this will be capable of supplying one brigade for 20 days, or two for ten, as the case may be.

The present expedition is the first real test of the new mobilisation scheme—our first attempt at mobilisation after a scheme laid down in black and white. Of course there are faults and flaws, but, on the whole, the scheme seems to be working with smoothness. There may be many flaws which at present have not

become apparent ; but the present expedition should be a good test of the scheme as a whole.

From the date of my arrival at Nowshera to the 31st of March, (the date the Brigades concentrated on Mardan) my time was spent in learning the language of the campaign, which is doing my best to become personally acquainted with as many officers of the Divisional Staff as possible. As I do not intend dealing with the expedition until it is fairly on the march, you will not find much about our movements before the first of April in these letters,\* but I must not pass on without making mention of our *impromptu* mess in the Nowshera Railway Station. It was only the Refreshment Room, but for four or five days before the columns moved off to Mardan, about ten of us generally met there daily for our meals. There I first met most of the Commissariat and Transport Officer, Captain Batten, Brigade-Major to the second Brigade, poor Peebles of the Devons and Edwardes in the 3rd Gurkhas, brother to the man who was in the hands of Umra Khan. I remember the day that the Lahore paper gave up all hope of our ever seeing the prisoners again. Edwardes who was on transport duty, took the news badly and it was a great pleasure to assure him with authority that all that appears in printing ink is not Gospel : and a greater pleasure, fifteen days later, to grasp his hand and congratulate him upon his brother's safe return, as I was able to do at Panjkora. We

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\* Given in Appendix in part.

had many pleasant evenings in that waiting and refreshment room.

The secrecy which had heralded in the campaign was continued by the Intelligence Branch ; and information was as hard to obtain as milk from the pig-skin of the proverb. But there seemed certain information that the tribesmen were determined to resent the proclamation which had been served upon them, and to resist our advance through the Swat Valley. Local information was positive that there were large gatherings at both the Malakand and Shakot passes, but no information filtered through the Intelligence Office until the day before the advance across the frontier and then the information was inaccurate and possibly given with the intention of covering the real object of Sir Robert Low's advance.

The little station of Hoti Mardan was alive with the bustle and business of two strong brigades. (The troops which had up to this marched into the station, will be found in the list, in the beginning of this book). The march from Nowshera to the camp beyond Mardan, being a matter of nearly 20 miles, was an excellent test of the efficiency of the troops engaged.

*Nowshera, 29th.*

"To-day it is peace and we are all, comparatively speaking, at our ease in and about Nowshera, but by this time next week, unless I am a very false prophet, it will be war, and I expect that we shall know whether

the relief expedition is to be a long and serious campaign, or a short and concise one. Everything seems to turn upon the results of the first week. Certainly, the expedition is not the small thing which so many have imagined : it is not a small frontier disturbance by any means, and a slip at the beginning may plunge as into a sequence of difficulties, such as we have not had on the frontier since the last Afgan war, and in spite of the superiority of modern arms, the position of the two Brigades, which march the day after tomorrow, will not be so secure as many may imagine. As far as we can now say, the position and movement of the 1st and 2nd Brigades during the next week will be as follows :—General Waterfield's Brigade will press forward from Hoti Mardan, *via* Jallala into the Swat country, and attempt to take and hold the Malakand, General Kinloch's Brigade will leave Hoti Mardan at the same time as the Second Brigade and will make for Shakot, the other pass on the Swat Spur of the Black mountains.

The two Brigades will open communication at the foot of the hills, and if a decided stand be made by the Swatis, at either one or the other of the passes, the 3rd Brigade will act in support of the Brigades attacking the pass defended in force, if such support be required. If the passes are taken the Brigades will push on and concentrate at the Swat River. They will halt before making a crossing until the third Brigade comes up to hold the passes. This will be the campaign of the next week, and until the strength and the attitude of the

tribes has been tested by personal contact, it is impossible to say what will be the further developments of the campaign beyond the Swat River. But as soon as the passes are reached the position of the force becomes an unpleasant one. In the first place it is in an enemy's country, with a partially unknown and totally unsurveyed tract in front. It is moving daily further from the base of its supplies, into a country which may probably be unable to feed it for any measurable length of time; and then comes the great point will the neighbouring tribes remain passive to its advance? Upon this latter point hangs the whole issue of the campaign. If they remain passive the force will only have the Swatis to deal with a primitive enemy on the front, but if the *jehad* should catch on, and the tribes rise, the right flank and rear will be threatened by the Bonerwals and the left flank by the Momads, Utmankhels and others and the advance to the relief of Chitral will assume grave dimensions as we have at present little at Peshawar and Pindi in the way of Reserves, and the tribesmen know this; and the length of the line of communication will swallow up all the divisional troops. If we get over the next week well, the relief of Chitral should be an easy matter but if otherwise, I fear that it will not be 14,000, but something close upon double that number that will be required. Then again there is the chance that the Swatis by this may be well in with Umra Khan, and that the Khan may be sufficient general to let the force well up into the unknown country until the

lengthened line of communication has weakened it before he commences serious opposition. While reading the above it must be remembered that there is practically little information from across the frontier and that the little that has come is unreliable.

The Seaforth Highlanders and the Field hospital of the 3rd Brigade came in to-day. The Seaforth's looking fit and well. Now, we come to the Commissariat department. An extraordinary effort which the officers have made can be appreciated when one considers that in nine days twenty days' supplies have been stored at the base or pushed forward to first and second class advanced depôts for the three brigades, strengthened by divisional troops, and that much of the transport had only just arrived from active service in Waziristan. This is almost, if not quite, a record, I should say, that it speaks well for the new mobilization scheme as it touches this department.

One hardly likes to make use of rumours from native sources, as they are so conflicting and strange. Yet there are grave rumours floating about among the Natives about the remainder of the Chitral garrison and one curious rumour has it, that one Haider Khan is backing Umra Khan with a promise of Afghan help. This is a strange coincidence in nomenclature, as Gulam Haider, the Afghan Commander-in-Chief, is on the border with the Boundry Commission and Mr. Undy, and it just shows how the rumours are weaved

and what they are worth. A certain amount of truth contorted out of all semblance of its original form is the shape in which these rumours reach us.

*"Hoti Marden,, March 30th.*

The object of the field force has been made officially public. The first object of the force is to relieve Chitral from the aggression of Umra Khan, who has been given a date of grace (1st April) to leave the confines of the country. The advance will be by the Swat Valley, and if Chitral cannot be reached without passing through the Bajour territory and Dir this latter *route* will have to be taken to force Umra Khan from Chitral, for if he does not tender submission, and make reparation for his conduct, the Indian Government has determined that he shall be punished at all costs. Therefore it has carefully pointed out to the tribesmen of Swat, Boner, and Bajour by every means that the quarrel is not with them, but with Umra Khan, and they are warned against taking up arms against a force which, passing through their country, bears them no malice. The length of time the force will remain across the frontier will depend upon the time that it takes to thoroughly accomplish its mission of punishing Umra Khan.

The above is a summary of the reason given for the advance. I would hardly have repeated it at such length if it were not to show clearly, the curious fact that no mention is made of the recent military disaster which, in the opinion of all men connected with the



force, has intensified, if not changed, the whole objective of the expedition. In fact, the force is now being called the "Relief" force. Scraps of news which have found their way up to Mardan, show that the public already is beginning to cry out over the expense which the expedition must occur. If the quarrel with Umra Khan were the only incentive they might have an excuse for their outcry, but after the events reported earlier in March and with the present suspense before them their sympathies should run level with their pockets. Since the representatives of the Imperial Government have already been attacked, and are still reported to be in peril, if not massacred; the question has ceased to be an open one of policy.

There is only one course remaining and that is the one which is now being taken and which is the sending of three brigades across the frontier, the day after to-morrow, without tents and with as little baggage as possible; the object of the haste being that the prestige of the Government may be safeguarded and and its representatives saved. It is not now a question of the sagacity of political officers. We are passed all that, and our first object is to relieve the beleaguered resident and troops in Chitral; the feeling that it is a relief force actuates every man who will cross the frontier within the week, yet it is curious that the official announcement does not lay stress upon the new feature of the expedition. Here in the field, I can find no reason for this reticence upon a most important point.

During the last few days the Divisional orders have been charged with lightening rapidity, which points, as I have before remarked, to the supposition that very little reliable information is available. It was first intended to push on two brigades only with light equipment : now this order is changed and all three bridages advance together leaving all tents and heavy baggage behind, while 20 days' supplies will be arranged at the advanced depôts. Apparently the line which the three brigades will now take will be, one to Malakand Pass, one to Shahkot, and the remaining one to Morah, the three concentrating beyond, respectively at Khar, Alladand and Thanna this side of the Swat River. The attitude of the Swat tribesmen still remains uncertain. I hear that a *jirga* has come in and that it has made satisfactory advances, but it seems open to doubt if this *jirga* is worth anything. It is certain that no supplies are coming from Swat territory, the general impression through, which has been prevailing for the last few days, is that the Swatis are not so keen about defending the passes as they were first reported to be.

The 2nd and 3rd Brigades bivouaced last night and the 2nd marched into Hoti Mardan this morning at 8-30. The 3rd Brigade coming in three hours behind them. Until you see two brigades and their baggage in marching order, you do not realize what a tremendous transport system is necessary in Indian warfare. Continental soldiers who can rail supplies to within a few miles of their fighting line, while the

officers join in first class carriages, would never grasp the situation unless they could see such a sight as the sixteen miles road between Nowshera and Mardan, as it was to-day ; except for the troops it was one *kafila* of camels and mules from end to end.

The 2nd Brigade looked very well as they came in from their eighteen-mile march, the distance not seeming to have told upon them. But starting at 3 A. M., they had had the advantage of a cool march. The 3rd Brigade which had had by the time it reached Mardan a nineteen-mile march, had begun to feel the distance, but the Sikhs came in singing and the Gurkhas only looked dusty and certainly made the best show at the first march. Very few fell out in either brigade and only a couple of *doolies* were called into requisition. Both brigades have encamped across the Mardan stream where Parker's mule battery (No. 2 Derajat) which came in last night had preceded them. The 1st Brigade comes in to-morrow morning.

Subsequent events have proved the remarks casually made in the above letters to have been of signal importance. There is no doubt that the false order of attack was given on purpose to cover the possibility of the real intention leaking out. In fact the rapid concentration of the three brigades at Dargai before Malakand on the 2nd of April, was undoubtedly a great piece of generalship on the part of Sir Robert Low, and so secret was the intention kept that General Kinloch continued in the belief that he was to attack the Shahnkot Pass with his brigade, until he

received the definite orders to concentrate on Dargai and only to make a demonstration with his cavalry as far as Pali on the morning of the 2nd of April.

So successful was the coup that the defenders of Shahkot, who were more numerous than those at Malakand continued at their posts, while the latter pass was being forced, and they did not arrive to oppose our advance until the 4th April when they were checked by General Kinloch's brigade at Khar Kotal.

By far the most important point upon which I touched were the bazaar rumours. Even before we had crossed a single company into the Swat country the natives had brought bazar rumours that Umra Khan was backed with promises from Afghanistan, and the further the force advanced towards Chitral the more constant became the local reports to this effect as is shown in a future letter written from Dir after the capture of Sher Afzal.—“Regarding the various reports which have circulated as to the present position of Umra Khan, the following information is forthcoming :— I sent an intelligent native of Dir, with my Pathan interpreter to penetrate as far as possible towards Asmar. These men, though they never actually reached the Khan's stronghold, had conversation with several of his followers. It appears that part of Asmar has been more or less ceded to the Khan, and that he had prepared it as a refuge as soon as he had heard of our intended advance into his country, and as we advanced forward, strings of mules daily carried the wealth and munitions of Mandia up into the stronghold.

At present the Khan is in connection with the Amir's men, but apparently he always has been, and I fancy that he is as safe in his connection with Umra Khan as he ever was, etc."

To me the fact that he should consider Asmar an asylum, safe enough to transfer to it his "Lares and Penates" is proof positive that there are matters requiring explanation which may influence our Afghan policy in the near future. But I mention this here just to show how near I was in the beginning to the truth even though I only gave the rumours half-heartedly, not liking to believe them. Personally I am strong in the belief that these frontier rumours are generally the "truth contorted."

*Hoti Mardan, March 31.*

"Definite orders for the advance of the division were out last night, and it is not probable that there will be any further changes now; though the last week has been remarkable for the number and variety of changes which have been sprung upon the brigades. Already as I write General Gatacre's Brigade, is moving off towards the frontier; it is to be the covering brigade to the two advanced columns, and is moved to-day more or less to make room; the 1st Brigade, which has been strengthened by the addition of the 4th Gurkha Rifles, marches on the first to Landkhawar and on the second reaches Pali, from which position it is only removed from the Shahkot Pass, two or three miles. The route of General Waterfield's Brigade brings it on the night of the first to

Jellala, and on the second to Dargai, which is within reach of the Malakand Pass. The 3rd Brigade goes in part only, to Malakand, the remainder holding itself in readiness if wanted elsewhere.

We are still uncertain as to the attitude of the Swat tribesmen, but certain *Jirgas* have come in, and the general opinion, deduced from the interviews, with these people is still that we shall not meet with much opposition.

The Swatis are bound by their traditions to make some show of fight against an invading army. Hence the gatherings on the passes. But it is possible that their fight will only be a flash in the pan, with the object of easing their consciences, preparatory to complete amicity to the advancing force. This information may not be worth a pice, and we may be received with stubborn resistance, this latter however does not seem to be the opinion of the politicals, and they hold out every expectation that we shall be across the Swat River by the 5th. The river is fordable at the present season, and the baggage will be crossed by flying bridges for which the Sappers are arranging *mussucks* and Attock watermen. The two advanced columns when they have forced or crossed the passes, concentrate at Alladand. From there, as it is now ordered, General Kinloch's Brigade pushes on with all expedition towards Chitral, while the second proceed to Dir. As soon as we get to the Swat Valley we shall probably have a very bad time, as the country is reported to be cruelly hot during the next two months, and the three brigade

going up with nothing but waterproof sheets and pals to protect them. They say that we shall get our tents again, but this is doubtful.

You will be surprised that I have made so little mention of Umra Khan, but to tell the truth one barely hears him mentioned; he is quite another consideration, and we shall not have to think of him until we are quit of the Swat-Bonair troubles. No further news from Chitral Garrison has found its way here, and we have no authenticated *khubber* beyond the news that Ross's column met with a disaster. As the troops start with 20 days' supplies the chances are that a halt is contemplated when the Swat has been crossed. Then no doubt, we shall know more where we are, in regard to the real and original destination of the expedition.

The 1st Brigade marched into Mardan this morning from Nowsherra. They left Peshawar three days ago. The 11th B. L. were the first to arrive, followed by No. 3 Battery Mountain Artillery. Then the Bedfordshire Regiment, played in by the band of the Guides, the 15th Sikhs and the 27th Dogras marched in to their own Bugle Bands, the Royal Rifles bringing up the tail of the Brigade. The latter looked the least fit of all the regiments in from Peshawar, but they have been poisoned by residence at that station.

*Transport*—As far as I can learn unless orders on this subject have been changed, the 1st Brigade is to have all available mule transport, the 2nd Brigade the camels and the 3rd Brigade and the divisional troops

the residue of the camels, carts, and what transport they can find. Before I bid a farewell to pretty Mardan I must say a word of thanks to the Guides for the generous way that they have dispensed hospitality to all."

The above letter shows that even though the object of the expedition had been put in divisional orders yet there was an under current of opinion generally rife throughout the force that we were to be an army of occupation rather than a relief force. Also which is important and which will be a subject of future comment that the original plan was that General Kinloch's brigade should lead, to Chitral, if necessary, this being self-evident from the fact that this brigade was furnished in the commencement with the whole of the mule transport available in the force.

From Hoti Mardan the advance was made as follows : The 1st Brigade to make the demonstration against the Shahkot, advanced to Landkhawar, the other two brigades advancing to Jellala.

*Camp Landkhawar, April 2.*

Owing to the inclemency of the weather, which is delaying the start, I shall have time to commence this letter before we march. We certainly have not started under good auspices as far as the elements are concerned, for last night at about 12 P. M., it began to pour, and heavy rain at the start of a light-order march is trying. If this kind of weather continues during our passage over the Swat mountains, I fear that it will be responsible for more casualties than the



Swat bullets. We arrived in camp yesterday about 2 P. M., and though we are still in our own territory, yet every precaution was taken to prevent a surprise, in case the hillmen might consider it advantageous to strike early. We had small flag communication with the 2nd Brigade in the evening, and flashlight signalling was attempted after dark, but with little success; it is improbable that the communication direct with Jellala will continue after to-day, as we work well up into the lower ridges of the hills, but it is possible that communications may be opened with the camp of General Waterfield's Brigade.

We are now in full view of the Shakhkot range, and last night the hill side over above the pass was simply alight with watch or bivouac fires. This and some information which we received this morning would point to the probability of a show in the pass. Two Hindustanis came in last night, who reported that they had been stopped in the pass by the Swatis, whom they report to be in great force, and to be possessed of a large quantity of stores. Further the Politicals have noticed that the very village before which we now lie is almost denuded of men, and the opinion is that the sympathies of these villagers also are with the Swatis, and that in some capacity or another they have gone to aid them. But another 24 hours will remove all doubt. At the present moment we are thinking more of our personal discomforts than anything else, and the general feeling is adverse to the day marches which we are doing.

*Dargai, April 2, Later.*

Since writing the above the whole complexion of the first part of the campaign has changed, and instead of writing you from Pali below Shahkot, I am here in the open at Dargai, where the three brigades have concentrated. Apparently the march of General Kinloch's Brigade, augmented by a battalion of Gurkha Rifles was but a feint to induce the defenders of the Swat Range to divide their forces between the two principle passes, with a view to weaken the defence of the Malakand, by which it was intended that the entire division should cross, the object of taking the division by a single pass, being to cause as little irritation as possible to the Swatis with whom we have no quarrel at present. But the utmost secrecy has been maintained throughout, and when the 1st Brigade fell in this morning they had not the remotest idea that their destination was not as it had been in orders.

Two squadrons of the 11th B. L., however, took the road to Pali and crossed the frontier four miles outside Landkhawar, making a show as if they intended the occupation of Pali.

The road which the cavalry took lay for a few miles along a valley beneath a spur of the Swat mountains. The summits of these hills were lined at intervals with men who were presumed to be the watchmen of the Swats, so probably, well as the demonstration was meant, the tribesmen have made themselves quite conversant with the disposition of the whole division.\*

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\* This is an error, the demonstration was completely successful—L. J.

The cavalry, though they advanced almost as far as Pali, were not molested in any way, and no gatherings in force were noticed. Some few of the villagers were seen to be carrying arms, several Martinis and Sniders being among these. A deputation was met coming from Pali. This consisted of the *Lambadar* of the village of Pali and his *chowkidars*. He professed to be much agitated on account of an embassy from the trans-mountain Swats, who, he said, had threatened to loot and seize the village, if they did not at once supply their quota of fighting men for the defence of the hills and passes. Possibly his story was a pretence, but in spite of his protestation the cavalry returned, *via* camp to Jellala the same evening, their mission having been accomplished.

The weather has been very trying, and during the last 24 hours, there can hardly be a man who has not been drenched out-and-out. This is not an encouraging state of affairs at the outset of a long campaign. The weather has naturally proved, a great drawback to the Commissariat Department, and has thrown them back in the matter of supplies over 24 hours. The mobilization scheme seems to have worked admirably in every department except that of transport, and there is no doubt that the peace footing maintained is absolutely incapable of coping with the demand of a single division, so what would be the hopeless state of an attempt to equip an army corps under this head no one can imagine.

As far as we know the 2nd Brigade is to lead into the pass (Malakand) to-morrow morning early, and if

M. 2676

27-2-06.

the entrance be blocked by tribesmen, it will resort to force, and will be supported by the 1st Brigade. The 3rd Brigade, to which the 2/4 Gurkhas have now returned, remaining at the base until it has sufficient transport to take up the line.

It was during the demonstration made by the 11th B. L. to Pali that I had first experience of those annoyances and mistakes which I afterwards found are all in the day's work of a war correspondent in the field and which in time you think nothing of. As the preceding letter expresses it, the concentration at Dargai was kept a profound secret until 12 p. m., the night of the 1st. In fact, General Kinloch had made out the the formation in which he had intended to attack the pass. So confidential was the order calling him to Dargai, that Colonel Scott marched out with the 12th B. L. towards Pali with sealed orders, and it was not until I was within a few miles of the latter place that I found out that I had accompanied a demonstration only, and that the 11th returned to Jellala, not even going to Dargai. The general opinion was that the Malakand was to be attacked at daybreak on the following morning (3rd April), and it was positively a necessity that I should be there. It was three o'clock when I found out the truth, and by the map it was ten miles though an enemy's country if I went straight as the crow flies to Dargai. If I returned to Landkhawar I had sixteen miles to go : I did not know the language and Colonel Scott was unable to furnish me with a Sowar as he was going back to Jellala and

not to the front. The road was abominable, being in places but the stony bed of a rivulet or water course. If I returned *via* Landkhawar I should probably become benighted before I caught up the rear guard of Kinloch's Brigade so there was only one alternative, I went back with the 11th B. L. a few miles and then struck out for Dargai with the compass to guide me, as well as I could work the road out by aid of the map. The road was bad, but I stumbled along keeping clear of the villages. I met one party of four armed men and rode up to them and asked the way to "Dargai" the solitary name being all I could master in Pushtu. They directed me sullenly and pointed North-West. I rode past them, feeling very uncomfortable, but not turning my head, to impress them that I had no fear. In reality I did not like the situation in the least and was very thankful to leave five hundred yards of shingle between us. Thus I stumbled on until five o'clock, when I struck the rear-guard of Kinloch's brigade and pushed on into Dargai with it.

Dargai was full of excitement as the enemy were reported to be in strength, lining the Malakand Ridge, and it was an open secret that the attack was to be made in the morning. Lieutenant Cockerill, of the Intelligence Department, with a party of the Guides, had made a reconnaissance of the valley leading to the pass in the afternoon, and had been fired on at long ranges ; but the party had seen enough to convince them that the Swatis intended making a stout resistance at the pass head. I spent the night in the

camp of the 4th Gurkhas, and before daybreak I started off towards Dargai behind a party of Sappers. I may say here that the night before the forcing of the Malakand the disposition of the camps was as follows : General Waterfield's Brigade was at Dargai proper, that is, at the southern foot of the Malakand Spur. Divisional Head-quarters and the two remaining Brigades were at Sakot, about two miles further south in the direction of Jellala. I set out while it was dark, and losing the Sappers ran foul of a Bedford picquet and for a time it looked as if I should be placed in the guard-tent instead of getting through to the front as I was unable to furnish the countersign. Luckily I knew the officer in command of the picquet, and he let me through. When I arrived at the 2nd Brigade camp day was just dawning, and then I found that, instead of moving out at daybreak, the attack was not to commence until eight. I then foraged for a breakfast, and was lucky enough to snatch a standing meal at the Head-quarters camp. Omelette and *chaupatti* is what we had, it is marked on my memory as I thought at the time what a curious meal it was to fight on. Yet it was all that most of us who stood round that table had that day.

*Top of Malakand Pass, April 4.*

When this letter will reach you I cannot think. It is, in the state of present confusion, almost impossible to get press wires off from this side of the pass, and though the first intimation of the action yesterday got through early, now everything is blocked. Now

to the action. The attack was made by General Waterfield's Brigade, the force consisting of the Guides Cavalry and Infantry, the Gordon Highlanders, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, the 4th Sikhs and the artillery of the whole division the infantry of Kinloch's Brigade in support. The Guides Cavalry formed the advanced-guard they were followed by the Guides Infantry with orders not to fire until fired upon from above. Resistance was anticipated because on the evening previous a reconnoitring party of the Guides was fired upon when it worked up the Pass. The Guides Infantry were followed by General Waterfield and Staff, and the 4th Sikhs with pipes playing came in the General's rear while the three Mountain Batteries, took up a position on the right. A geographical description of the enemy's position is hard to give, but this is as like it, as is possible here. The enemy's position lay on the left of the advance, the defences being *sangars* (stone breast-works), both natural and artificial, on the face of the hills. The first *sangars* was upon the summit of a very precipitous hill, about 3000 feet above the level of the valley; the next peak about a mile further along, was defended by three *sangars* at its summit the hills then became lower to the peak above the Malakand Pass. This was the strongest position, there being many *sangars* all the way up the sides of the pass; consequently this was the main defence. The hills on the right side of the valley, I may say, were not defended.

As the advance-guard worked up the valley the various flags and banners ornamenting the *sangars* were easily discernible, and it was just nine when the first shot was fired from the nearest defences. This was followed by some volleying from an impossible range by the tribesmen. By this the guns had come into position upon a low hill on the right of the valley, and they opened with shell at about 3,000 yards on the *sangars* on the higher crests. Their fire was fairly accurate at this range, and several shells appeared to get home among the peaks. The 4th Sikhs and the Guides then were ordered to scale the two hills first mentioned, and after taking the defences to work along the crest and to take the enemy on their right flank. The ascent was a most tedious one, and it was quite two and-a-half hours before either of the Native regiments came within range of the defences on the summits. The resistance which the hillmen made was admirable, and at one *sangar* the Guides were completely checked for some time, as they were only able to get volleys from three rifles to bear on the enemy. It was here that Lieutenant Ommaney was wounded. The 4th Sikhs were directed to form the advanced party of the attack on the left of the Guides. The spur up which their ascent was made being very narrow, only two Companies could be extended by half Companies. The remainder worked their way up at open interval. One Company was detached under Captain Falcon and directed to cover the advance of the regiment by ascending a steeper spur on the left. The



ascent of this spur was precipitous, and a masked *sangars* being above it; Captain Falcon's Company at one time was in a critical position and suffered severely. The tribesmen as soon as the Sikhs came within range opened a galling fire, and the ascent being so precipitous the men were forced to climb upwards without being able to answer this fire adequately. In fact, volley firing was impossible. The distances seemed to have been marked down by the defenders, for the officers at once became special marks. Major Tonnochy was wounded before half the ascent had been accomplished, and Captain Buchanan and Lieutenant Harman were hit with two Native officers before two-thirds of the ascent had been accomplished. The tribesmen stuck to their strongholds to the last, and were only turned out when it came to rushing them with the bayonet. It may be mentioned here that the defences which the 4th Sikhs stormed one after the other had not been weakened by shell fire. Four shells were fired from the batteries at these positions, three of which over-topped the peak, the fourth taking harmless effect in the hill side. The enemy continued their obstinate defence until the Sikhs had won the top of the position. It took the regiment a little over  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours to do this, and by the time they had driven the enemy from the village and corresponding ridge, the regiment had been under arms nineteen and-a-half-hours, having had four men killed; three British, three Native officers and eleven men wounded.

While the Native regiments were working upwards the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Gordon Highlanders advanced up the pass, the former leading, the Maxim parties of the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Devons coming into action upon the main defence about 11 o'clock. By eleven it was seen that the day was not ended, as it had at one time been anticipated ; the hillmen were determined to stand to their *sangars*, and, unlike the Hazaras, were not driven out at a long range by simple artillery fire. The guns were, therefore, brought along to a perfect position on an eminence directly beneath the Malakand peak, and from the short ranges of 1,000 and 1,500 yards they shelled the main defences and the village on the summit of the Malakand. They made excellent practice, and after half an hour of artillery fire General Waterfield gave the order for the main assault by infantry upon the position.

The Borderers took the centre and went up in three parties, the Gordons taking the right, the Maxim guns going up as far as was possible with the attacking line. The ascent was tortuous and steep, and it was not until one o'clock that any of the assaulting parties were up to the defences. The King's Own Scottish Borderers bore the brunt of the fighting and they suffered most severely, one party especially by coming into a cross-fire from two *sangars*. The hillmen defended their hold step by step as long as they could fire, though they rarely waited for the bayonet.

The only bayonetting that really took place before the crest was reached being when a small party of Gordons under a non-commissioned officer were able to creep up a water course and drop down into a *sangars* where some twenty Swatis and tribesmen were busy enfilading one column of the Scottish Borderers. The business did not last long, the Gordons dropped upon them from above, and with an incessant firing taking place on every side the work of bayonetting was accomplished, silently and efficiently. The surprise was so complete that the hill-men had no time to handle their tulwars and knives. • But in other instances during the ascent the rifle fire was generally sufficient to clear all obstacles of men.

An officer of the Borderers told me that several times men came out to rush his party, but they never stood through the rifle fire. Inch by inch the tribesmen retired to their stronghold on the summit of the pass, and before making the final assault the Scottish Borderers and the Gordon Highlanders halted. The last climb was simply precipitous, the men hauling each other up, 2nd Lieutenant Watt, of the Gordons, was the first man to top the brow of the hill. Three of the enemy rushed him, followed by more. Lieutenant Watt pluckily stood and shot two of the three men with his revolver, calling to his men to follow him, thinking they were close behind. Finding himself alone he discreetly rejoined his party. Earlier in the day a bullet carried away the same officer's shoulder strap

after having first passed through the brain of a corporal.

The final assault was made, and a few minutes to two the pass was won and the village was in flames.

But though by five minutes to two the crest of the hill was taken, yet the fighting was not finished by any means. When General Sir Robert Low perceived the difficulties of the main assault he dispatched an order that General Kinloch's Infantry should support the attacking line. The Bedfordshire Regiment, the King's Royal Rifles, and the 37th Dogras were therefore sent up the face of the hill on the right of the attacking line of the 2nd Brigade the 15th Sikhs alone remaining in reserve: the Bedfords were lucky enough to find a water-course and going up in splendid spirit they were in time to render material service in support of the main attack. The disposition of the line of support was, the Rifles on the left of the K. O. S. B's., four companies of the Bedfords on the right rear of the three left companies of the Gordons, the other companies of the Regiment on the extreme right. The Dogras ascended on the left of the Bedfords until the water-course was reached, then the four companies followed the mixed party of Gordons and K. O. S. B's. to the attack of the village, while the Dogras worked up the heights and peak to the right.

The fighting was severest when the summit of the hill had been taken, and in many places on the wooded plateau which crowns Malakand the fanatics were

dislodged by the bayonet alone. In one narrow gorge the defenders stood so stubbornly that one man of the Gordons was killed, two mortally and one slightly wounded before the work was finished. But by twenty past two the enemy had been hunted well into the opposite and corresponding ridge with the Bedfordshire Regiment and the Dogras in hot pursuit. The Gordons and the K. O. S. B.'s upon whom the brunt of the assault had fallen were collecting slowly outside the burning village, and for the most part were endeavouring to snatch a little rest.

There is no other word for it. The hillmen made a really determined resistance, and if they had been better armed, the brigade certainly would not have forced its way in some five hours. If held by disciplined troops, the pass, (save the mark ! it is but a water causeway most of the way) would have been impregnable. The tribesmen, of course, gave themselves away to the artillery fire by displaying many insigniæ and banners.

The Bedfordshire Regiment and a party of Dogras, who followed up in support of the fighting line, took up the pursuit and drove the enemy across the ridge behind Malakand into the Swat Valley beyond Khar. They lost one man killed and one wounded in the pursuit, and they came back this morning to Malakand with about twenty prisoners. To show how complete has been the business, neither the bivouac at Khar on the Swat, nor on the crest of the Malakand, nor the 4th Gurkha camp at the mouth of the

pass, has been fired into during the night. This is significant. But returning to the attack. The Guides and the 4th Sikhs worked round, but the main defences had been taken and burned before they arrived.

Our casualties were as follows :—

K. O. S. B.'s.

	Officers wounded	...	2
	Rank and file killed	...	8
	" " wounded	...	10
Gordon Highlanders			
	Officers wounded	...	3
	Rank and file killed	...	5
	" " wounded	...	10
4th Sikhs			
	British officers wounded	...	3
	Native officers	...	2
	Rank and file killed	...	2
	" " wounded	...	8
Guides			
	British officers wounded	...	1
	Rank and file wounded	...	2
Rifles			
	Rank and file killed	...	4
	" " wounded	...	4
Bedfordshire			
	Rank and file killed	...	1
	" " wounded	...	3

During the artillery action

No. 3 battery	shot away	48 ring shell	148 shrapnel
No. 8	" " "	35	" 69 "
No. 2	" " "	30	" 134 "

In the meantime as upon the valley side of the pass all fighting had ceased, the Mountain Guns and the baggage began to scramble up the hill-side. There was little or no pathway and the crowd pushing up was so dense that the parties of Sappers who were out to make the pathway were able to do little. After two hours of constant labour sufficient purchase-way was at last made and the 2nd Brigade baggage commenced to stream up towards the Kotal. Late in the evening a strange order was flagged up to the signal station on the summit of the pass. It was ordering the 2nd Brigade and baggage back to Dafragai. It was a fatal order, for it was evening when the message came and consequently in half an hour the whole side of the Malakand became a chaos. The baggage of the 2nd Brigade were trying to force their way down, while the transport of the 1st Brigade was struggling upwards, and all this upon a path-way on which two unloaded mules could only pass at intervals, and then there were the wounded. The shouts to let the doolies up or down came from every side, but all that happened was that the crowd swayed backwards and forwards, the crush of men and animals being so great that it became impossible for the Sappers to continue their work of road making. When night fell, the whole pass had become a block, and though the men unencumbered with animals were able to get down, there was nothing for it but to unpack the mules and wait for morning. Many of the wounded had a wretched time, for they were kept out of hospital until

the next day. Major Tonnochy of the 4th Sikhs, was one of the unfortunate ones, his doolie was detained on the pass until the following morning. It was a fatal error to attempt to cross the baggage upon a pathway like we had, and if the crossing was necessary it was not wise to have commenced until sufficient transport officers were present to organize the passage. In fact, it puzzled everyone to understand why the 2nd Brigade was ordered back at all. If it had been put to the men they would probably have chosen, tired as they were, to have bivouaced on the Kotal and chanced getting food especially as they could hear the Bedfords and Dogras still fighting away in the direction of Khar.

The official report says that 500 of the enemy were killed during the day. This probably is an exaggeration ; as the inclination throughout the campaign has been to err on the side of large proportions. On the night of the 4th there were, I suppose, about sixty to eighty bodies scattered over the pass. Perhaps the enemy carried away another forty : but their flight was too rapid and they were too smartly followed by the Belfords and Dogras to have successfully made away with four hundred corpses. Upon careful local investigation I have come to the conclusion that 120 will cover the dead. This number may be doubled to find the total of wounded. The actual numbers engaged in defending the pass may have been anything from two to five-thousand.

While the batteries and the details of Kinloch's Brigade were bivouacing in the shady little cup-



plateau on the summit of Malakand, with the 4th Sikh and Guides holding the corresponding Kotal, the Bedfordshire Regiment and the Dogras were forcing the beaten enemy clear of the hills to the north. These two regiments debouched onto the plain of the Swat Valley about a mile from the village of Khar, and the enemy having been completely dispersed, Colonel Paterson determined to let his tired regiment bivouac at Khar. The village was deserted, but the men found plenty of Native food—rice, flour, and sugar, this with the addition of some calves and goats the whole force fed sumptuously and slept the night in the village, and were unmolested.

On the morning of the 4th General Kinloch received his orders to advance with his brigade as far as Khar.

*Camp towards Khar, April 5.*

The Dogras and Bedfords had only just come in from their own little business down in the Swat Valley and rejoined their brigade on the summit of Malakand Kotal when the whole of the 1st Brigade was ordered to march and to push on to Khar from whence the two regiments had only just returned. The Bedfords furnished the advanced-guard and went down over the other side of the Malakand on a fair footpath, the Dogras and 15th Sikhs coming by another and the baggage and Rifles following the Bedfords. The Bedfords and Dogras reached the plain about the same time and pushed on past a village which had been burned on the proceeding evening. On the next knoll was a small walled fort, and the column checked

and reconnoitred. Then news was brought from a party of Sappers, road making in front, that the enemy were in force on the high ridge of hills to the right. The Bedfords pushed forward and threw out parties to the base of the big hill, one company crowning a low hill on the exact front. The Dogras then pushed through and took up a forward position on a low kotal on the right front of the enemy's position. The latter appeared to be in great force, and were ensconced in a line of strong sangars topping the summit, crest, and ridges, covering our advance. The column might easily have pushed forward, and forced the enemy's position but the baggage could only follow slowly, and it would in all probability have been rushed if not waited for. As it was the advance-guard (the Bedfordshire Regiment) was only just up in the nick of time to secure the lower positions and if Colonel Paterson had not pushed Captain Cambridge on with two Companies to the top of some high ground at the base of the hill, the high ground would have been held by the enemy, which would have entailed its being assaulted in the face of a cross fire from their position above. As it was the party found the enemy swarming up on the far side. The Sikhs pushed on to a low hill still further in advance in support of the Dogras. In fact, the Sikhs and Dogras were in a tight place for some time being under a heavy fire from the height above while repeatedly assaulted by fanatical rushes. The Bedfords had been in action about three-quarters of an

hour before Major Cunningham's Mountain Battery (No. 3) came up from the rear. It came into action, and shelled the heights from 1,800 yards, but did not find the range. Major Cunningham then limbered up and took up a position at about 1,600 yards from the lower *sangars*, and the ring shell then began to find the enemy.

Captain Cambridge with his two companies was suddenly assaulted by a large body of tribesmen who had evidently made a bid to reach the Kotal which the Bedfords held, and on seeing the position occupied had hidden in the water-course below. They attempted a rush ; but could not stand the magazine fire at the short range with which the two Bedford companies received them. The majority of the fanatics succeeded in regaining their cover, though few could have escaped unwounded. In the mean time two other companies of the Bedfords under Lieutenant Findlay had worked up the side of the hills on our right and had checked a party of the enemy who attempted to work round this flank with the object of securing the crest of the ridge. Although his party was never severely in action, yet Lieutenant Finlay in the choice of his position probably saved the baggage from an attack which could comfortably have been made if the enemy had succeeded in working along the ridge.

General Kinloch now arrived with the Rifles, and took up his position with the guns. In the meantime there was no sign of the baggage coming up, and the Dogras were still hotly engaged, in fact they wer

running short of ammunition, and the enemy were reported to be simply swarming round the hill into the plains beneath them. At this period a small party of fanatics with a flag attempted to rush the position held by General Kinloch and the guns. A couple of volleys from the Rifles stopped the party, but the incident proves that a *jehad* has been preached, and that we are threatened by a fanatical rising of the tribesmen. Consequently we may have as severe a business in front of us to relieve Chitral as was the last Afghan campaign—perhaps worse, when we have Umra Khan's levies to deal with behind these fanatical tribesmen.

The General, when the remaining Companies of the Bedfords and part of the Sikhs had joined him, moved the guns 200 yards nearer the enemy's position across a nullah, and as the enemy was seen to be collecting on the lower hills the infantry were extended to repel an attack, as a rush was anticipated. At this period a party of the Guides Cavalry under Captain Adams and Lieutenant Baldwin came up from the rear, and just at the time when the enemy were reported to be debouching on to the plain beyond the position held by the Dogras. The Guides were ordered to the front, their arrival was most opportune, for the enemy were coming down in thousands, evidently with the intention of attacking. Captain Adams formed up his tired troop at the base of the Dogra's Kotal and charged home.

At the sight of cavalry the rabble stopped, wavered and fled; but even though the going for the horses

through cornfields was almost knee deep, yet the sowars got into them and succeeded in killing fifteen or twenty before their animals became too blown to go a step further. It must be remembered that these very Guides Cavalry had come right through from Dargai over the Malakand that morning, without even watering or feeding. If the horses had been fresh, they would have inflicted a really heavy loss upon the enemy. The mob did not wait for the cavalry, though when any one man was singled out he turned and fought, their method being to sit down and slice at the horse's legs. The casualties of the Guides Cavalry during this charge were Lieutenant Baldwin and four sowars slightly wounded by sword-cuts, and six horses wounded by sword and bullet wounds. This attack by the Guides Cavalry must be considered as most opportune and probably saved the camp from a general rush.

Certainly it was sound policy to send cavalry with the 1st Brigade, though I hear that it was only at the last moment that they were allowed to go. Captain Adams pursued right up to the slope of the hill to within short range, but the nature of the ground and the tired condition of the horses prevented him from inflicting further loss. It was now nearly night, and there was nothing left but for the column to bivouac in the open where it stood. Major Cunningham, however, gave the *sangars* a last benefit. The shooting of the battery was simply perfect, and the last fire of the day must have had a demoralizing effect. Shell

after shell burst upon the defences, and in one instance four shells in succession fell into the centre *sangar* almost at the same spot. The brigade then bivouacked out, and we were undisturbed all night. But we shall have to wait here for supplies and possibly reinforcements, as we are not yet in a position to go to Chitral. There seems to be no doubt but that there were over ten thousand on the hills above us last night, and the general impression is that they are the men who were defending the Shahkot Pass. They had come across to join the defeated party from Malakand.

There is no doubt but that the tribesmen made a better show at Malakand and Khar Kotal than they made at any subsequent engagement, and it is certain that the appearance of cavalry in the valley entirely demoralized them. They had been told that the Malakand was impregnable, and that even if we did force it that we should never get our horses or guns over; and here they appeared 24 hours after the pass had been won. As soon as the Cavalry rounded the Kotal where the Dogras were in action, and before they formed up into line of attack, the forward motion of the mob of tribesmen ceased, and with one accord they swayed back towards the hills. Owing to the rain of the two preceeding days the tilled land was more or less a slough, and the charge was therefore not half as effective as it should have been. The men opened out and took the individual fugitive piece-meal. But this I will say for the tribesmen that each man when he found himself singled out turned and made an

attempt at defence, which generally meant sitting on the ground and cutting upwards at the horses and the sowar's legs. Captain Adams pursued right under the position held by the tribesmen on the hill, and Lieutenant Baldwin's troop followed the enemy almost to the walls of the village of Badkhel. If the going had only been better and the animals fresher, double the number of the enemy would have been accounted for.

There is one incident which took place when Major Cunningham's battery first came into action, which is worth recording. The enemy had planted many coloured standards over their defences, and before the guns had found the range correctly and when the shells were not getting home, one of the enemy, evidently a deserted sepoy, stood on the centre *sangar* and signalled the misses with military precision.—“ Miss, low to the right, high to the left ! ”—in accordance with the inaccuracy of the firing. Though our fighting line was extended with fixed bayonets, in anticipation of a rush and the tension was great, yet the affair was too palpable and absurd, and a laugh passed right down the line. But No. 3. R. A. made up for this show of sarcasm when they found the range.

As the cavalry had warded off the rush that was anticipated, and as it was getting dark, there was nothing left for us but to bivouac in the open. No lights were allowed, and we turned in with our side arms on, after having had three meat biscuits apiece, expecting to be attacked at any moment.

Opinions in the force seemed divided as to the way the action of Khar Kotal was fought. General Kinloch undoubtedly fought a waiting battle which always gives encouragement to an Oriental enemy. If it was the General's intention to draw an attack upon his line and then to inflict a heavy loss his tactics were successful, only the infliction of the punishment fell to the Guides Cavalry ; but for their appearance, the attack would have been made, upon the infantry fighting line : it would have been made upon the Dogra's position, and the question is would they, even supported by the Sikhs, have been able to have withstood it until reinforced from the Bedfords or Rifles. Their position was a difficult one to reach as a winding nullah separated them from support, and if they had been forced to retire from their position, and the enemy had occupied it, the action would have taken a grave aspect, as the tribesmen could have brought a cross fire to bear on any force retiring or advancing from the Kotal. Then, again, the General had absolutely no information as to the numbers of the enemy either on the hills behind or actually upon the frontal crest. Therefore he had a choice between two evils, and under the circumstances perhaps he chose the lesser, and was lucky enough to be helped out of a difficult position by the timely arrival of the cavalry. It afterwards transpired that we met at Khar, the largest force that ever opposed us, it being composed of the remnant of the Malakand defenders, the garrison of the Shahkot Pass and a force from the Boner



and Bajour countries, twelve to fifteen thousand men in all. Their losses were heavy, being about one hundred and fifty killed and as many wounded. The guns did most of the damage, being able to get shell into them in mass on several occasions.

*Khar, April 7.*

There is no doubt but that attitude of the tribesmen of the Swat Valley has completely changed since the battle of Khar heights on the 4th, and I doubt if we shall hear another shot fired before we cross the Swat. The night after General Kinloch's Brigade was engaged, the hills above Khar fort were simply teeming with armed Swatis, and we slept with our side arms on, anticipating that the camp would be rushed in the dark. But the fire of No. 3 Battery and the charge of the Guides' Cavalry has evidently worked upon the courage of the Swatis, for not a sign of one was seen or heard during the night, and in the morning but for dead and wounded, there was not a Swati within a four-mile radius of camp. Opinion is conflicting as to the number of the enemy's losses during the two days' engagement. I think the official estimate is inclined to be over-rated, and I hold to my opinion that little more than 100 bodies were upon the summit and slopes of Malakand on the evening of the 3rd. The losses at Khar Kotal were, I fancy, greater, and I would estimate them at something below two hundred. There was no rushing up to as at Malakand, and the guns never had such a clear mark, or were able to get the enemy in mass. I have been talking to several senior officers upon the subject of

the two days' fighting, and they are of the opinion that Malakand and Khar are quite the severest engagements that British troops have been engaged in on the frontier since the Umbela Campaign, and that the engagements were equal to very many of the battles in the Afghan war.

The tribesmen certainly deserve admiration for the way they threw themselves away upon superior arms, and there were several instances on the Malakand which proved their undoubted bravery. In one spot we found one Gordon Highlander dead, two mortally and one severely, wounded, surrounded by as many dead and wounded Swatis; while in another *sangar* a Highlander was discovered locked in the arms of a giant Pathan,—both dead. At Khar Kotal, when the 37th Dogras were hard pressed on the Kotal, the enemy literally swarmed into the fire of the Bedfords; and there is not the slightest doubt, but that we should have had a repetition of the rush at Amed Khel had not the Guides arrived. The Swatis themselves allow that the sight of the cavalry was too much for them; they being deluded into the belief that no cavalry could cross the Malakand. The cavalry charge, with the subsequent destruction of the Khar defences, seem responsible for the present pacific attitude in Swat.

But there were over 10,000 of the tribesmen present at Khar Kotal, and there numbers represent many more than the actual inhabitants of the valley we are now in. It is surmised that a large percentage of the combatants

were the men who had been told off to obstruct our passage of the Shahkot Pass, and that they arrived to fight before Khar, being too late for Malakand.

After Khar Kotal, a hostile gathering took place at Tanna, but yesterday this also had removed, those of the tribesmen, who are still fanatically inclined having crossed to join Umra Khan, the more pacific returning to their villages.

The Second Brigade, with headquarters, arrived at Khar on the 5th with the exception of the Gordon Highlanders, who with the 4th Gurkhas are holding the Malakand. General Blood, A. G., with Major Meade, Political Officer, and Staff went out in the afternoon to make a reconnaissance towards Tanna where the enemy had collected. The reaction had already set in, and the villagers of Aladand and Badkhel were ready with peace demonstrations. It was not until Aladand was passed and the Swat river reached that shots were fired on the reconnaissance. Then, from the top of a hill commanding the Swat river, a few dropping shots were fired. The escort of Guides' Cavalry replied with a couple of volleys, and the reconnaissance continued without further interference. The river was found to be a narrow and rapid stream, not deep, but very rapid. Major Owen, D. S. O., found a ford and rode across, thus having the distinction of being the first European to cross the Swat since McNair entered the country disguised as a Native *hakim* some twelve years ago. On the morning of the reconnaissance the hostile

gathering on the slopes above the village of Tanna was extensive, but the head Khan of the village came in and made peaceable protestations.

*Khar, April 8.*

The hills of Swat are bare and precipitous, even for the Himalayas, strangely contrasting with the valleys; the latter at the present season individually forming one long stretch of green and waving corn, which in luxuriant growth exceeds anything that I have ever seen in the plains. These stretches appear to be fed with moisture from the rain-shed above them, though every valley we have passed up to the present has been furnished with a rapid stream even at this season. But the appearance of all the soil adjacent to the Swat river, and the fact that all the villages are built upon eminences, points to the supposition that the valleys are severely flooded at some season in the year, and that much of the fertility is due to alluvial deposit from these floods. The soil throughout is black and intermixed with pebbles, washed smooth. The products seem to be few in variety, barley and bearded wheat being more prevalent than any other cereal, though I have seen occasional mixed patches of oats and vetches. Onions and clover also are cultivated to some extent. The growth of all vegetation seems so luxuriant that once the crops are sown there seems to be no further labour to the husbandman, and his crop out-grows the weeds. These latter are plentiful, and among them one notices the red poppy, the

dandelion, and speedwell of the West and many milk-sap weeds. Trees are scarce and the variety proportionately small, walnuts and mulberry being in the majority. In fact the Swat villagers seem to hold wood as one of their chief valuables, for now that they are returning from their fastnesses in the hills and are bringing their goods and chattels with them, one finds that when they dismantled their homes they removed all the wood, that it was possible to drag up into the hills.

Their architecture is crude, their houses and huts being built in square blocks with river-bed stone and mud plaster; the roofing is mostly shingle and flat though in places a rough grass thatching is found. There is primitive wood-carving in most houses, especially on the supports and door lintels. The villages seem to be constructed with a view to defence, all being loop-holed; and in many cases whole villages are surrounded with a loop-holed wall, and often a dry ditch as well. The tastes of the people seem simple, and all their implements are primitive. The men are fair of physique, active and not unhandsome, their dress being flowing pyjamas of the pattern worn by the Kabulis, and long loose coats reaching to the ground and with wide sleeves, considerably longer than the wearer's arm. Voluminous cloth turbans are worn upon occasions. In disposition they seem childish and simple, and hardly as vindictive as their recent opposition proves them to be. They are fairly cleanly; much more so than the average Mohamedan of the plains. The women are fair and with good features; in

fact, the majority are comely, with straight noses, round faces, very *petite* features and muscular limbs. Their costume is the same as that of ordinary hill Mohamedan women. They are said to be laxer in their tone of morality than most of the hill-tribe ladies. The climate of the valley at this season (April) is moderate, with a great difference between the temperatures of night and day. If the valley were more wooded it certainly would be one of the most delightful hill resorts of the Himalayas, except that the months of May and June are reported to be excessively hot. But then residences could be made upon the hills, not in the valley itself.

The Swat river is a rapid and shallow torrent. Its flow is so fast that its bed is a mass of rounded pebbles; the water is clear, cold and sweet. It should be fordable in many places at this season of the year; but during the melting of the snows and heavy rains, it becomes a raging and practically impassible river. Mussack rafts are navigated upon it by the natives. The cattle of the valley are big and fine and good milkers—as they should be having the best of grazing—domestic fowls also abound in the valley. There seem to be snipe, quail and partridges, and also *chakoor* to be had in quantity. In fact for an unknown country it is a great one, and its valleys flow “with milk and honey.”

Perhaps more unnecessary time was wasted in the Swat Valley than at any other period of the campaign up to the relief of the Chitral Garrison. More time

was lost at the Panjkora, but that was an unfortunate necessity which grew out of the four days wasted in the Swat Valley, in the changing of the positions of brigades and the handing over and receiving of transport; we never made up this lost time, as the swelling rivers would not wait for us. If the Swat had been crossed on the 5th by the 1st Brigade a whole brigade with baggage would have been able to have forded the Panjkora on the 7th, and 8th. For this river was fordable on the 10th, the day the advanced guard of Waterfield's Brigade arrived there. And that was the last day it was fordable, and the force was kept waiting until the 17th, the day upon which Gatacre's Brigade crossed Major Aylmer's bridge and had the final engagement of the campaign at Mamu Gai.

On the 6th April General Waterfield's Brigade passed General Kinloch's and encamped at Aladand, after having made a demonstration up to Tanna.

*Khar Camp, April 8.*

On the 6th when General Waterfield's Brigade marched into Tanna we were all of the opinion that there would be little or no further fighting for at least four or five days. The people of Tanna were as tame as possible, and came out with gifts and protestations of friendliness. The brigade marched through the lower streets of the township and then fell back to its camping ground at Aladand. The orders were to bridge the Swat on the following day, and the people of Tanna promised through the political officers to supply wood, mussocks, and labour to make the bridge

on the following morning. Accordingly two Companies of Sappers and Miners under Major Aylmer went down to commence the work of bridging at day-break on the 7th. They had barely commenced to work, when they were fired at from the ridge of rock-hills which covers the passage of the Swat at this point, and it was found that the ridges were held by a large force of hostile tribesmen. About twenty banners had been raised, and so hot a fire was opened that the Sappers and Miners were unable to continue their work. The Maxim of the K. O. S. B.'s was sent by General Waterfield to support them, but it was inadequate to cope with the fire, and No. 8 Mule Battery was sent down. The ground which the battery had to cross was boggy and heavy, and by the time that it was in action it was apparent that the enemy were in greater force than we had imagined would be probable at this point.

Groups of one to two hundred were seen swarming in from the north-east beating drums and waving banners, and they simply filled Adam Darai and Chakdhara, the two villages which command the ford of the Swat River. In fact, they were collecting in such force that the Sapper officers at one time were afraid that they might know a ford, and crossing, cut them off. The position was this. Exactly to the front of the spot where the Swat river has five beds, and which was reported fordable, were the two villages, Chakdhara and Adam Darai, situated on rising knolls, and fairly wooded, making a very strong position to



defend the ford. On the right of this position, about two thousand yards away, rises a small knoll, and beyond this a ridge of hills parallel with the river, completely commanding the passage. As there were no corresponding positions upon the bank which we held, it can be realized what a strong position omit the enemy held, viz., the ridge, the knoll and the commanding villages. But they had neither Generals or organization to make them put to use the magnificent natural positions which nature had given them.

As reports of the increasing strength of the enemy came in, regiment after regiment were sent into action by General Waterfield, the 4th and 15th Sikhs being followed by the Borderers, and it was quite expected that we were in for the heaviest engagement of the expedition up to date. The enemy were in greatest force in the vicinity of the village or fort of Chakdhara fronted with broken and marshy ground difficult for any force to cross under fire, so it was naturally expected that a call would be necessary for the 1st Brigade to come up from Khar. About eleven o'clock the action was general all down the banks of the river, and the guns having found the range were doing good practice at the *sangars* on the summit of the ridge. The cavalry of the division, the 11th B. L. and the Guides, under Colonel Scott were ordered to find the ford and to do their best to get into the crowds of enemy who were still streaming in from the Boner side, and among whom were some mounted men, presumed paid followers of Umra Khan. It was no easy business crossing a rush-

ing torrent like the Swat under fire, and it was some time before a squadron even could file across, but an effort was made and Captain Wright's squadron succeeded in fording, Shual Singh being the first man across.

The loss at this ford was remarkably small, for though the tribesmen had every chance of decimating the mounted men, yet such is their fear of cavalry that, instead of making a stand at the time when they had success almost assured to them, they turned and fled. Not only did they seek shelter from the open, but, at the sight of the Lancers, they evacuated their strong position in villages and upon hill crests, and a general flight set in.

The force of the current of the Swat is enormous, and at the spot where we forded it was flowing at quite twenty miles an hour, in fact it was in places nothing but a cascade, the spray breaking over our heads as we forded.

The passage being so dangerous, it took time for the Lancers to file across. Lieutenant Sarel was only saved from drowning by a sowar holding his lance out to him when his horse was taken off it's legs by the current. When the leading squadron was across they found the ground at first very broken and marshy. Thus the flying enemy had a long start. But the Lancers got into them before the hills were reached and did great execution. The Swat tulwar and spear could make no show against the lance, and the Sikhs and Pathan sowars inflicted

heavy loss before the stony ground and the heavy-going made further pursuit impossible. Individual show of bravery was constant among the tribesmen, and one fanatic rushed down to intercept the cavalry as they came across; waving a banner and a sword, he rushed straight upon the advancing body of cavalry and was cut down by Captain Delamaine. Two others lay up in a *nulluh* and picked off their men before they were cut to pices. Five sought shelter in a bush over a dry well, and when the sowars found them, the tribesmen pulled the first sowar, horse and all, into the well with them.

But for the most part it was a rout, an indiscriminate flight and the cavalry had little to do but to choose their men and slay. A few turned to defend themselves with gun or tulwar; but only a very few, the rest took the lance in the back, without daring to face about. Such is their dread of cavalry. It was silent killing, save, for the occasionally exultant cry of a Lancer, or objurgation upon the unfortunates he slaughtered.

The ground was not the best for cavalry and immediately before the Chakdhara village it was an absolute swamp, thus it was that numbers of the tribesmen made good their escape.

But they had lost their opportunity. If they had stood to their defences, the cavalry would have been decimated as it crossed the ford and if the village had not been evacuated it would have been terribly punished as it crossed the marshy ground in front of Chakdhara.

Captain Wright with his troop pushed on in pursuit of the cavalry with whom it was supposed was Mahomed Shah, the brother of Umra Khan. But the going became bad and with the exception of very few the enemy's cavalry succeeded in gaining a pass over the mountains then supposed to be the Katgola Pass. The main body of our cavalry had halted at the village of Uch, from which a stream of greybeards came with their arms full of sugar and limes as peace offerings. They all protested that they had taken no part in the action at the passage of the Swat River, though I have not a doubt, they had hidden their arms in order to come out and protest friendship. Uch must be between four and five miles from the spot where we forded the Swat River. The valley is a lovely stretch of green, almost as fertile as many of the Cashmere valleys.

When the cavalry had watered they trotted back to find that there had been no further resistance after they had left the river, and that the two battalions of Sikhs had crossed and had invested the villages which commanded the passage; the 4th Sikhs being in Adam Darai, the 15th Sikhs in Chakdhara. The casualties had been slight; one man of the K. O. S. B.'s was killed and two other British soldiers wounded two sowars were killed and several wounded; the Sappers and Miners lost a few men wounded and the Sikhs had two drowned while fording the river. Thus ended the engagement of the passage of the Swat River. In the morning it certainly looked as if it would have devel-

oped into a heavy business and so it should have if the tribesmen had been possessed of any knowledge of warfare at all other than indiscriminate rifle fire. They willingly evacuated positions impossible to the attack of cavalry ; and at the only time they were given a really possible chance of inflicting severe loss upon us, they fled like a parcel of scared sheep. Yet those same men fought inch for inch against us at Malakand. There is no doubt that the hill men never expected that our Cavalry could come up the pass, and their presence seemed to strike indelible panic into their ranks.

The present disposition of our force is as follows :— General Waterfield's brigade holds the ferry over the Swat River, General Kinloch's the valley at Khar and the third, brigade General Gatacre's, the Malakand Pass and ridge ; but now that the camel road is open and stores and supplies are coming over in plenty, the order of advance is to be changed. General Low has come to the conclusion that it is necessary that headquarters should advance with the leading brigade, therefore the next senior general is to be left in charge of the Swat Valley. This is General Kinloch ; so the 1st Brigade does not push on to Chitral as was first arranged ; but retires to the duties of the third, while the second, General Waterfield's, takes its place and goes to Chitral. The third coming through from the Malakand and taking the place of the second. It is impossible to describe the disappointment which this reversion of orders has brought to the 1st Brigade.

A curious incident happened close to me at the passage of the Swat. At one time I was with Captain Peebles' Maxim party which was covering the advance of the K. O. S. B.'s to a position on the banks of the River. The two Maxims being of Martini bore the sharp-shooters on the knoll had singled out their smoke as a mark and the fire was very hot, two bullets striking the metal stand of the Maxim as Captain Peebles sat working it. Then one of the men who were kneeling beside the gun suddenly leaped from his stooping position, high into the air, and rolled over on the ground. We thought that the man was dead. But he slowly picked himself up looking very scared. We found that a Martini bullet had struck him just behind the right cartridge pouch, and piercing to the skin, had worked between his skin and shirt right across his stomach and had passed again through the belt and buried itself in the left pouch, the cartridges of which it had knocked to pieces. The Martini bullet remaining in the pouch.

Mohamed Shah, Umra Khan's brother, was reported to have been conducting in person the Swat Passage fight, with a troop of the Khan's cavalry. During the earlier phases of this engagement we certainly heard bugle calls, the 'Advance' 'Retreat' 'the mess call,' distinctly, but the bugler managed to escape with Mohamed Shah, for we heard his instrument again at the Panjkora fight. Captain Wright and his troop did their level best to catch Mahamed Shah and his cavalry, and they almost came to terms at the mouth

of the Katgola Pass. But the mounted tribesmen rode up into the hills and the Sowar's horses were too tired to follow. A couple of the enemy's horses however were captured. Mahamed Shah did not evince any great talent of generalship. Nor did he appear to have inspired the tribesmen with much confidence.

As soon as the two regiments of Sikhs had crossed the Swat and occupied the villages of Chakdhara and Adam Derai, the Sappers at once set to work collecting material to build a tressle bridge. The passage of the infantry after the cavalry had crossed was no easy task, and linked arm in arm it was as much as the half companies could do to stem the current. The 4th Sikhs unluckily did lose a couple of men drowned. Once a man was washed from his foothold, the weight of his pouches and belts were sufficient to cause him to drown unless he had the support of his comrades.

Another whole day was spent at the Swat, and it was not until the 9th that the advanced-guard of General Waterfield's Brigade moved. On the morning of the 9th the Guides, the 11th B.L. and 4th Sikhs marched, *via* the Katgola Pass to Serai. Personally I had been with the 1st Brigade up to the present, but now it became imperative to push on and join the 2nd. When I reached Chakdhara I found that General Waterfield's headquarters were not yet prepared to move, and that the last regiment of the advanced guard had marched two hours before. I had to catch up, so alone I went over parts of

the field over which the cavalry had charged. Many of the bodies were still lying about. I did not have a pleasant ride as I was not sure of the country, and I had to pass many *nullahs* and knolls which might have covered a stray marksman of the enemy. At the corner of the Katgola range about two miles from Uch I completely lost my way and the situation became unpleasant in the extreme. But I succeeded in unearthing a Bajouri whom I approached very cautiously. I covered him with my revolver and tried to explain to him what I wanted. As I knew no Pushtu this was difficult, but at last he seemed to understand, and he trotted beside my pony. I did not feel sure of the man at first, especially when he led me suspiciously close to a hamlet outside which lay the charred remains of some Pathan, who killed probably at Khar, had been burned by our men. But whenever my man flagged I pressed the revolver against his temple, and in time I regained the unmistakable track left by a force of men with baggage. I caught up the 4th Sikhs about 4 o'clock, and went up over the Katgola Pass in their company.

*Camp Panjkora River, April 10.*

I do not know when this letter will reach you. I am half afraid that it never will, as I have pushed on with the advanced guard of the leading brigade, and am now thirty miles in front of headquarters at Khar, though I presume that General Low will be up shortly. I pushed on as the Politicals had news that Umra Khar contemplated making a determined stand at



Kotkai and Mandia Khan, and it would have been a pity to have lost this fight. But we crossed the Kam Rani Pass this morning only to see smoke ascending from the stronghold of Kotkai. Information is not reliable, but it appears that Umra did not think it advisable to defend Kotkai, and sooner than let his stores fall into our hands he burned the stronghold. But stray men have brought other reports; one party said that Sarif Khan of Dir had swooped down and defeated Umra,\* thus anticipating us. But as the Guides Cavalry have already forded the Panjkora and are now reconnoitring the position of the demolished fort, I shall probably be able to give you some news before I finish this letter. This much is certain: Umra's star is no longer in the ascendant, and he is now only surrounded by his outlaw adherents and professional freebooters. The power of his name is fast subsiding with the tribesmen, and on every side they have fallen away from him. Moreover, the total of casualties from the Malakand to Swat has considerably damped the enthusiasm raised by the preaching of the *Jehad*, and the advanced guard of the leading brigade has reached the Panjkora River without so much as having a shot fired at it since it left the Swat.

To the astonishment and chagrin alike of officers and men, the 1st Brigade has had its mule transport

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\* This in a way proved to be the case as two days later Sharif Khan and his adherents turned Umra Khan's retainers out of Dir after some desultory fighting.

taken away from it, and it has become the Reserve Brigade instead of the leading one. The reason being that the holding of the Swat Valley being so important, General Low prefers to leave his senior Brigadier there. All of us have great sympathy with the brigade, as their disappointment must be intense. I feel especially sorry for the Bedfordshire Regiment, for this is the first chance they have had of active service for years, and they are the keenest of the keen to on. Not only that, but they are a really fine regiment, officers and men to boot, and on the 3rd and 4th of the month did real excellent work. The centre of gaze at the Malakand Pass was fixed on the main attack of the 2nd Brigade, and little or no mention was made of the work which the Bedfordshire Regiment did in conjunction with the 37th Dogras. They ascended the hill on the right flank of the main attack, and after the main attack was delivered they scampered up, to use a figurative term, and were in time to rush a village and *sangar* on the summit parallel to the Rifles. They drove the enemy from this and then they pursued the broken tribesmen from hill to hill, from ravine to ravine right down the north descent from the Malakand into the valley below and by evening they had, with the Dogras, penetrated as far as Khar.

At Khar they bivouacked for the night without kit and without rations, only getting what common Native food they could procure at Khar village. In the morning the regiment had a tedious march back to the

Malakand ; it was allowed an hour's rest and General Kinloch's Brigade marched, the Dogras and Bedfordshire Regiment with them, down into the valley again, and that evening fought through the engagement at Khar Kotal, their only food being a tin of biscuit between two men during the whole day. After all this, they have only sent five sick men back to the base, having lost one killed and three wounded in action. The losses of the Dogras at the Kotal were heavier. It cannot be that General Kinloch's Brigade is not fit.

I am afraid that the press has not dealt impartially in the description of the Malakand.\* In the stray copies of papers which have come to hand I find that all the credit of the attack and assault is with the main attack. Now this is not fair, but it was easy for on-lookers to fall into the error, as the centre and most attractive portion of the panorama was the attack by the British regiments. But in reality, brilliant as was the assault made by the Gordon Highlanders and King's Own Scottish Borderers, yet the hardest work and most brilliant attainment of the day was the flank attack by the Guides and the 4th Sikhs.

As a matter of fact, I believe that the assault of the Malakand developed under the force of circumstances, for I do not believe that General Waterfield intended the main attack so early in the day ; but he was bound by circumstances and could not wait until the flank of the position had been turned completely. If you

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\* This might also be said of General Low's Malakand dispatch.

could have seen the height up which Colonel Dempster led his Sikhs and Colonel Battye his Guides you would appreciate the work which these regiments did. In places it was absolutely sheer precipice, and the men could only haul themselves up on their hands and knees. Half company and sectional volleys were impossible, only three to four men at the most being able to fire together. And on the crest of the hill there were *sangar* from which the enemy had to be dislodged. No mean enemy; they were well armed with breech-loaders and they made a point of singling out the European officers. In front of one *sangar* the enemy had marked down the range at 150 yards; here it was that both Tonnochy and Harman were wounded. They were no mean enemy, and under no circumstances would they budge from their defences until the Sikhs were prepared to rush the last fifty or seventy yards. That the Sikhs had twelve casualties shows that the work was hot. Some of the British Regiments may have had heavier casualties, but without deprecation, I doubt if they were led up the hill with the man-saving skill which signalled Colonel Dempster's assault. This skill can only be acquired by long residence among the hills of the frontier. The Guides, too, did a great day and were once in a very tight place indeed, but the inherent fighting power of the regiment pulled them through. I have added these notes subsequent to my account of the taking of the Pass, for I am of the opinion that, in common with the other correspondents, I have not

given the prominent position to the flank attack which is due to the regiments concerned in it.

When I left Khar yesterday the 3rd Brigade was also there waiting for the arrival of the 4th Gurkhas before it moved over the Swat. The Sappers and Miners were busy under Major Aylmer bridging the Swat River, building wooden piers, and filling them with stones. They were working all they knew, but material was not forthcoming in very great quantity. As I said in a previous letter that wood is very valuable in the Swat Valley, and most of the villagers took as much as they could up into the hill fastnesses. As all wood is likely to be taken up for bridging it is not likely that they will hurry themselves to bring it down again. Nevertheless Major Aylmer hopes to bridge the Swat in three or four days. The sooner the better, for the snows are melting, and the river swelling considerably. The main body of the 2nd Brigade were across the Swat yesterday, and supplies on mules and camels were streaming across. But the advanced guard had pushed on over the Katgola Pass, and the 11th Bengal Lancers, the Guides Cavalry, (one squadron) and infantry of the 4th Sikhs, and No. 2 Derajat Battery encamped in a valley at the foot of the Kam Rani Pass, which they all crossed this morning, except the 11th Bengal Lancers. The valleys here are simply lovely, dotted about with groves of plane, mulberry and walnut trees; in fact in places you might imagine that you were in the vale of Kashmir. The flowers are beautiful; white iris lilies, poppies, buttercups, thymes

and mosses conveying one at times to a semi-fairy-land.

They say that we are now eight marches from Chitral, and that Waterfield's Brigade is to push on to its relief. Though I expect that it is little of relief that Dr. Robertson now, requires for with Umra Khan reduced to six hundred followers, the investiture of the place must have been raised. They say that a ten-foot road is to be made up to Chitral, perhaps we shall come back in tongas.

*Panjhora River, April 11.*

The excitement here to-day is intense, as the whole of Waterfield's Brigade is encamped on the river, and yet we are unable to cross, and the attitude of Umra Khan is uncertain. Lieutenant Fowler and Edward's are in his hands a forced march across the river, and we are unable to do anything for them. The Khan has certainly sent men to General Low, (for headquarters came in to-day), to find out what chance of terms he can make by playing off the lives of his two prisoners in the scale. But I have it on the best authority that the General has no intention of treating, and that he will tell the emissaries of the Khan that until he sees Edwardes and Fowler back again, no terms will be possible, naturally everyone is very anxious for the safety of the poor fellows, for the attitude of the Khan, as I said above, is suspicious.

The baggage guard of the brigade was fired at at long ranges, and an influential tribesman told a Native officer of the Guides that if we did not agree uncondi-

tionally to his terms Umra Khan had given out that he would kill Fowler as soon as we crossed the river. The same river unfortunately has served us a shabby trick, and is the reason of our being here in camp instead of having had Umra Khan settled. Three days ago it was easily fordable, to-day the melted snow has swelled it to a torrent.

Major Aylmer is up from the Swat bridge, and he hopes to have a bridge across the Panjkora by to-morrow night. Before the Sappers came the 4th Sikhs and Gunners tried to float a raft bridge across, but it would not do, the current being too strong. The situation is an important one as to the attitude of Umra Khan, since the authorities have seen fit to close the use of helio and wire to the press until further notice. This has been done because the press has been before the official reports on some preceeding occasions. The other news of the day is the story of Edwardes and Fowler's column in Chitral. Umra Khan released eight Mohamedan sepoys, or to be correct, one Hindu professing Mohamedanism and seven Mohamedans, and they worked their way into camp yesterday.

They bring the following story:—They were in Gilgit in January last when a message came from Chitral asking for help. Fowler started off in response to the summons on 16th January with Jemadar La. Khan and sixteen sepoys. On the 26th they arrived at Gufter and were joined by Edwardes and three sepoys. On March 4th the party reached Mastuj and were here augmented by a party of 40 of the Kashmir

Imperial Troops. They heard here that the road to Chitral was stopped, and on the 6th they reached Reshan (?) where they received information that the enemy were in advance of them and in force. The party stayed at Reshan and on the 7th the two European officers with 30 men made a reconnaissance down the road, leaving a subadar in charge at the post. The advanced party were fired on almost at once, and were forced to retire on the main body. One naik was killed and Fowler, with three men, wounded. As the advanced party retired the enemy followed them, and they continued to fight sharply all day. At night the whole party retired on the village of Reshan which had been deserted by its inhabitants. The little force remained here in a state of siege, the place being heavily invested by a horde of the enemy under the command of Isa Khan, brother to Shere Afzul of Chitral. The position of the little force was critical, for although they had a certain amount of ammunition yet they only had three days' rations and two gurrachs of water. The siege lasted six days, and they would have been in the last extremity of thirst if they had not succeeded in replenishing their water supply by sorties at night. At the end of the sixth day the enemy showed a white flag, and an interview was allowed to Isa Khan.

As a result of this interview, it seemed that two letters were to be written, and that one was to go to Robertson, and the other to Gilgit, the purport being that the party would be allowed to advance with-



out being molested, and that the British supremacy was to be accepted in the country. The late belligerents seem to have lived in fair harmony for some days, Isa Khan supplying food and other necessities, and showing the greatest solicitude for the wounded Fowler. On the third day after the cessation from hostilities Isa Khan organised a game of Chitral polo and invited the British officers and some of the members of the garrison to come and see it. This they appear to have done, for the game was progressing when a horde of tribesmen, nearly a thousand strong, swooped down and made prisoners of the party after a short struggle. They made away with most of the Hindus on the spot. But one Sikh and two Dogras who, in the last extremity, agreed to embrace Moslemism were spared, the Mohamedans being made simple prisoners. Thus 14 Natives and the two Sahibs were spared, and were at once bound and placed in separate confinement. They started for Chitral the next morning the sepoy leaving first. They were not treated badly, but were kept strict prisoners and bound. At Chitral, which they reached on the 19th, they were allowed to correspond with Robertson, and their own clothes being in rags, they procured through messengers' clothes, blankets, knives, plates, and forks. They were kept in Chitral some days, and on the 24th marched off to Drosh.

As soon as they left Chitral they were better treated and their fetters were taken off them. Still travelling they reached Drosh two days later. Here they were

treated very well, given clothes and even offered money. At Drosh they had their first interview with Umra-Khan. It seems at first he gave them the option of going with him to Bajour, of staying in Drosh, or working their way back to Chitral, but as he steadfastly refused to let their sepoy go with them, the officers refused to leave him, and preferred to await their fate in common with their men. They then accompanied the Khan into Bajaur and crossed one high pass, being for six hours in the snow. They stopped a night at Dir, and were treated well. From Dir they went on and reached Baruwa on the 28th of March. Here they appear to have remained. The sepoy asked Umra Khan to decide their fate at once, and he consulted a local Kazi called Mulla Powinda. The Mulla advised the release of the Mohamedan prisoners, the conversion (by force) of the Hindus, and gave no advice about the Sahibs. Umra acted on this counsel, and the eight sepoy were released. The sepoy were here parted from their officers and made their way into camp through the Utman Khel country.

The last news of Edwardes and Fowler was a letter brought in yesterday, which ran as follows. "Fowler, R.E., and Edwardes, Bo. Grenadiers, are shut up in Barwa. Can you get us out. Give bearers Rs. 100 J. S. F., 9-4-94.

P.S.—"Shall we try and bolt. People here panic. Moula-Moussa. The 100 between them." The letter was written upon a small scrap of paper, evidently part of an envelope. It appears that Moula was one of the

sentries told off to watch the two officers, and that he was induced to carry the letter by a promise of money : at one time he promised to abet in the imprisoned officers' attempt to escape if they thought fit to escape. The letter to the man could not be handed to him while on duty, it was therefore placed under a stone outside, when the prisoners were allowed a little air. The answer was conveyed to them by similar means.

There was an alarm in camp last night : this is the first night alarm that we have had during the expedition.

*Camp Panjkora River, April 11.*

There is just time for a brief notice of what occurred during the Cavalry reconnaissance yesterday, as I am not over confident if the wires have reached the office at Khar. I can only depend on rumours now. We, that is the advanced-guard, came up to the Panjkora yesterday and found that it was rising rapidly and was unfordable for infantry. But Colonel Battye, who was commanding the advanced column, ordered the Guides Cavalry across, to reconnoitre the burning pile, which was supposed to be Umra's stronghold of Kotkai. The Guides Cavalry under Captain Adams pushed across, and found the wash of the river over their holsters in places. Villagers just across the river advised them to turn back, as they said that Umra Khan with a large force was then on the other side of a low range of hills. But the cavalry pushed on to burning Kotkai. It was a large rectangular stone fort, with flanking towers, and there was

nothing in it of value to the advancing army, so the cavalry continued to advance; the path lay rather close under the cover of a hill, and seeing a native ahead Captain Adams, who was reconnoitring in advance of the party, called to him. He came on towards the party and as soon as he got within two hundred yards, he dropped on his knee and made a deliberate shot at Captain Adams. The cavalry moved up, and as soon as they were within four hundred yards of the hill top, a couple of volleys were poured into them by the enemy, who had remained well hidden among the cover of the rocks. The cavalry retired and returned some dismounted volleys from 600 yards, but were unable to do any good. They returned and re-forded the river with difficulty.

From this incident it appears that Umra Khan will make one more bid to save his name, and it now remains for us to effect the crossing of the river. To-day fords are to be searched for and rafts to be built. The only force upon the Panjkora at present is the 11th Bengal Lancers, the Guides Cavalry and Infantry, the 4th Sikhs and the No. 2 Derajat Battery and a Company of Gordon Highlanders, who pushed in with supplies from Swat last night. The Derajat Battery were unlucky enough to lose the carriage of a gun yesterday, the mule carrying it falling bodily into the river. The nights are becoming warmer.

On the night of the 9th we camped at Shamshere Khan, the post which is now known as Serai. In the morning the 4th Sikhs and a sub-division of the

battery moved on towards Panjkora by the Kamrani Pass, while the Guides Infantry, and Cavalry skirted round the foot of the Pass and reached the river earlier. Both on the evening of the 9th and morning of the 10th we had to traverse positions which might have been held easily by the tribesmen. Positions which nature herself had fashioned for defence, and from which an enterprising enemy might have delayed our advance with the greatest facility. But most of these positions were left undefended and when the tribesmen did defend a position, they invariably evacuated it even when the advantage still remained with them.

At about 9 o'clock on the 10th we first came in view of the Jandaul Valley across the Swat, and we concentrated with the other column (the Guides) about an hour later in a beautiful walnut and plane grove beneath Sado was chosen by Colonel Battye as a site for the Camp and it was pitched under the walls of Kot, a deserted fortress belonging to Umra Khan. The fortress of Kot is built in the style of all the strongholds of this part of the world and Chitral included. A rectangular building with walls made of stones taken from the river bed plastered in with mud and strengthened with beaming every two feet. The walls are generally three to four feet thick, and at the summit are loop-holed, a small platform being built inside just below these loop-holes to accommodate the fighting men. The curtain is defended by square flanking towers built in the same fashion as the walls. There are in some cases a moat round the foot of the

curtain and flanking towers. The entrance is generally chosen at the steepest ascent to the hill. In reality they are nothing more than walled in villages, for the interior is a continuation of flat-roofed huts divided off by narrow alleys. In the centre are a few huts of better architecture, which are the apartments of the Khan. These fortresses are all built on the same lines, and Mandia Khau Barwa, Janbatai, Dir and Chitral only differ from Kot in the matter of size. We found that the Kot fort had been almost denuded of everything of value, the only grain being a small stock of Indian corn. But there was a great quantity of wood, and it was poor generalship on the part of Umra, if he desired to oppose our crossing the Panjkora not to have burned Kot as he had burned Kot Kai beyond the river, for there was ample material for many bridges in the wood work of this one fort alone. By evening it was realized that we had arrived at the Panjkora just 48 hours too late. If we had only pushed on without all the delay in the Swat Valley we should have been able to ford the river easily; but the change in temperature had caused the snow in the hills to melt rapidly, and the river was rising by feet. In fact it was as much as the cavalry could do to struggle back. There was nothing to be done but wait until the Sappers could bridge it. Major Aylmer came in that evening from Swat and work was commenced at once. The reports from across the river were contradictory, but from the small reconnaissance of the Guides Cavalry we were ready to

expect fair resistance when we crossed the river. News too was in camp of Edwardes and Fowler. In fact Major Deane's Native agent made a visit to Mandia Khan, Umra's centre stronghold.

About mid-day on the 11th Divisional Head-quarters and the remainder of the Brigade came in to Sado Camp.

*Sado Camp, April 12.*

The Panjkora has proved almost as difficult a river to cross as the Swat, yesterday morning Captain Parker commanding No. 2 Derajat Mountain Battery, set his gunners to work and did his best to build a spar bridge out of timber taken from the Kot Fort. But a structure standing in the stream could not stand against the current and Parker's rafts were carried away. Then Major Aylmer, R. E., V. C., came in post-haste, having left the Swat Bridge nearly completed. He has worked like a horse since he has been here, and by evening had thrown a floating spar-raft bridge across, passable for infantry, and at 7 P. M. Colonel Battye crossed at the head of the Guides' Infantry, to hold the bridge head from hostile molestation during the night. The Guides bivouaced across the river, and Captain Peebles with his Maxim remains to-night on the near bank, supported by the Sappers and Miners and two companies of the Borderers. It is intended to push the 4th Sikhs over early in the morning, and then the bridge will be strengthened sufficiently to allow of heavier traffic than infantry.

To-day has been a fairly busy and exciting one. There are many conflicting stories about Umra Khan, but, judging from circumstantial evidence, one would rather be of the opinion that the Hindu Kush Napoleon is going to make a last attempt to save his reputation. Since last night several volleys have been fired at the camp by his men from across the river, while the evening before a panic took the baggage train coming in from Shamshere Khan and drabis left their mules and packs and fled in with a story that a hundred drabis and a hundred camels had been shot by the enemy. A party of Major Aylmer's Sappers went out to cover the retreat and save the baggage, and found that only a few shots had been fired and that the matter was a pure panic, the British baggage guard being perfectly composed and returning occasional volleys to a ragged fire from a few loose marauders. To-day a company of the 4th Sikhs under Lieutenant Beadon was similarly molested, but though the enemy kept up a smart fire with breech-loaders all day, yet they scored no hits, the return fire, especially, when a relief company added to it, being very effective. Up to the present, 10 P.M., the Guides' bivouac on the other side of the river remains unmolested. Possibly the enemy think that more men have crossed than one infantry battalion and are afraid to attack.

It is now fairly settled, I am informed, that Chitral will be advanced upon by way of the Jandaul Valley, which means that we turn west as soon as the Panj-kora is crossed, and make our way straight through



Umra Khan's own country. This means a longer march by a day, but it is necessary to break the Khan's power completely. To-morrow should be an eventful day in the annals of Indian history, for by 4 P.M. we shall certainly know what is the full power of Umra Khan, and probably the fate of Fowler and Edwardes. That the Khan will do the worst to them himself, I do not for a second believe, if the man has half the intelligence he is credited with.

Later,—Saturday morning. The Guides were not severely handled across the river last night. General Gatacre will be across the pass to-day, and most of his brigade, should be in this evening.

Aylmer and his Sappers worked day and night and as said above finished, a raft bridge so that it was available for the passage of infantry by the evening of the 12th. After some hesitation the Guides Infantry were allowed to cross, and Colonel Battye led them over the flimsy structure at about 7 P.M. The bridge then was so unfinished that the men had to wade knee deep on the further side before they made dry land. The crossing of the Guides this evening is perhaps the most interesting point of the whole campaign, because a force of circumstances, developed in the near future, proved it to be a false move and one which nearly brought disaster to the Regiment. But at the time that the river was crossed the move was not actually a false one, it only developed into one by a sequence of unfortunate events which no one there could have foreseen. General

Waterfield naturally was anxious to have his brigade across, or at least part of it, to save the baggage from further molestation from trans-river fire. The Engineer Officers assured him that the bridge would be perfected before twelve on the following morning (13th April) and there was no mention of the chance that the river itself would rise two feet and float down logs of pine-wood, which at nightfall were stranded high and dry upon rocks in the centre of the stream. The Engineers could hardly have been expected to foresee this, for it was not usual for the river to rise during the night. Up to date it had generally risen towards evening and again settled considerably by the morning. It was essential that the head of the bridge should be held, to prevent the enemy cutting the suspension ropes and the Guides went across with the impression that the 4th Sikhs should follow them at daybreak on the 13th. General Waterfield's last instructions to Colonel Battye were "to destroy all the villages of the valley which had been connected with the firing upon our baggage." The exact wording being. "12th April 1895. Guides to be ready 6.30 P.M. to cross and bivouac East bank of Panjkora river. At day-break, 13th, to burn all villages within reach, to turn out enemy from all positions from which firing issued to-day and yesterday." No orders were subsequently issued. In the morning, even when the bridge was found broken. No orders were sent ordering Colonel Battye to postpone his advance. In fact, this advance was countenanced by Lieutenant Cockerill, Intelligence

Officer, being despatched across the river in an Attock raft to accompany the force, and the first order helioed across to Colonel Battye was "continue burning villages"—this after Colonel Battye had signalled that two large columns of enemy were threatening him. This helio, of course, was not an answer to the helio reporting the presence of enemy, but it distinctly clears Colonel Battye from the attack made upon him by a certain portion of the Press, in which he is saddled with a want of judgment in carrying out the orders which he received on the night of the 12th after he had been cut off from the main force by the carrying away of the centrepier-raft of the bridge. Further up to 10 A.M. it was the general opinion that the bridge would be speedily repaired, for I myself carried the note from Colonel Leech to General Blood with the first information that the raft bridge would have to be abandoned and it was a quarter to eleven when I received the note.

*Camp Panjkora April 13.*

To-day possibly has been the most exciting that we have had up to date, and, as a whole, perhaps the most disappointing. Early in the morning it was found that the river had risen about a foot and that the force of its flood had intensified more than in proportion to the rise. Moreover, some lumber swept down by the flood had carried away the centre raft of the bridge. The Sapper party, personally commanded by Colonel Leach, R. E., did their utmost to replace the raft, but the current was so strong that the three-

inch rope which held the raft parted, and the raft was carried rapidly down stream with seven Sappers on it. They managed to get off, but the raft bridge was abandoned, and the Sappers set to work upon a suspension bridge at once.

In the meantime the Guides' Infantry had set about fulfilling their orders of the evening before, and they went to work at once to invest and dismantle all the outlying defences of the enemy, the smoke from the fires forming beacons all over the valley.

On the return to camp everything was in a bustle, for Edwardes, one of the two prisoners about whom we had been so concerned, had come into camp with the Shazada Political. His story was simple, and it corroborated the story told by the sepoys who had been released. He had come in, sent under escort to the river by Umra Khan, with a message, Mr. Fowler, the other prisoner, being retained, more or less as a set off against the answer to the letter which Edwardes brought. As far as we know, the contents of Umra Khan's note were as follows :—(a). What have I done against the Sirkar ? (b). How long will the Sirkar be still angry with me ? (c). What is to be my conditional punishment ? In anticipation of simple answers, to these very oriental questions it was promised that Fowler's release should follow immediately. The answers were : (a). Your interference with Chitral ; (b). Depend upon your future behaviour ; (c) We intend to march through your country to Chitral, and provided you do not molest us you need fear nothing for yourself and

country. This was simple and concise enough, but the later and unforeseen events of the day possibly have changed all that policy may have done. If Edwardes had come into camp last night, the Guides would never have demolished the entrance fastnesses to the Jandol valley.

Subsequent conversation with Lieutenant Edwardes proved that he held a good opinion of Umra Khan and that under difficult circumstances he had always been their best friend amongst their captors. In Mandia Khan they were shut up in a little cubical turret, and though they always slept with their guard, yet they were treated with all deference, and were allowed to sit in the political conclaves to which they were summoned.

They were allowed food of the country in plenty and were never stinted. Moreover, when Lieutenant Edwardes was set free the Khan without being asked returned him his sword in quite the orthodox fashion and promised to do his best to get Fowler's back as well.

When Edwardes, safe in camp, saw the beacon-fires of the burning villages he was much agitated, and said that he feared that those fires would be bad for his chum, his late companion in restraint. For himself Edwardes is looking well and fit, and he came into camp in knickers and stockings, and a khaki turban, bearded and bronzed he is well suited to the position he fills as camp hero for the hour. Though it has been a trying time, yet he has not been treated badly ; in fact, it is quite the opposite, and it clearly shows

that Umra Khan was alive to the fact that these officers, well treated, would be his trump cards in the face of the invading army. Edwardes' brother in the 3rd Gurkhas was here to be among the first to shake the wanderer by the hand. But while the pacific measures were being arranged the Guides with the hand of the avenger were carrying out their orders to the letter, and from earliest daybreak the tribesmen were warned of the consequence of firing on our baggage and rear, as they had done in the two preceding days.

#### ATTACK ON THE GUIDES.

We were just settling down and congratulating ourselves that Fowler would soon be in camp, when the helio flashed in the news that two overpowering columns of the enemy were bearing down upon the separated parties of Guides, on the big range of hills to the west of the river and the south of the entrance to the Jandol valley. The 2nd Brigade was ordered out to cover the retirement of the Guides. In a second the camp was a whirl of movement, and five minutes after the brigade assembly sounded the 4th Sikhs marched out of camp at the quick, followed by Captain Peebles and his Maxim, and by the Borderers and the Gordons. The prompt manner in which the Sikhs turned out deserves especial notice, and when they heard their mission, and that their brother corps, the Guides, were in a tight place, they broke out into a cheer. The big range south-west of our Camp and the south-east shed of the Panjkora valley was climbed by the shortest path, and the

brigade lined the western face to find desultory fighting taking place on the very summit of the corresponding ridge across the river.

Two parties of the Guides were engaged well out of range of any support from below except artillery, while another party unmolested was winding its way campwards along the foot of the range. But presently matters became more brisk at the top of the ridge, and it was seen that the Guides' parties were falling back slowly along two parallel spurs of the hill. At first it was difficult from the opposite range to distinguish friends from enemies, but as soon as the hillmen were fairly made out, General Waterfield ordered the guns to open fire. No. 8 Battery, (Major Shirres) opened with ring shell at 1,800 to 1,600 yards, and continued to fire until the enemy came low enough for the infantry to come into action. The disposition of the 2nd Brigade was:—Colonel Dempster, with the 4th Sikhs held a knoll on the left, with two companies detached, the K. O. S. B's. the centre, to right of battery, with Peebles' Maxims, with the Gordons on the extreme right.

As the Guides slowly retired, firing incessantly, it was seen that the enemy were closing up on them in overwhelming force. In fact, the whole hill side became alive with enemy and dense masses with banners were observed gathering in Jandula Valley and coming down from the heights exactly opposite the present camp. There was no doubt but that the position of the Guides was critical, in that they ran the chance of

being most severely handled, and completely cut off from the two companies which were in the camp. The enemy meant "blood," and were as eager as wild cats in taking up each position that the Guides evacuated. The party of Guides nearest the guns fared best, not so much through the cover of the gun fire, as having a precipitous line of retreat which saved them from the enemy's fire. They reached the ground about 4 P.M. The action along the whole of the left of the 2nd Brigade then became general, as the enemy were well down the higher slopes and spurs of the hill. They were in larger force than we have yet seen them during the campaign, and were excellently armed. The first party of Guides were now practically safe, but the party on the sky-line spur were in a tight place, and the spectacle of their engagement was apparent to the whole force. The party on the hill crest which had been supported by Lieutenant Codrington's Company was personally led by Colonel Battye, and he was reluctant to retire an inch. Step by step each vantage ground was given up, every man being cool and collected, a telling fire by section volleys covered the retirement. At the last descent the enemy came down with a rush, but a volley killed the bannerman who led it and stayed the wordsmen, many of whom were close enough to roll great stones down upon the Guides.

Here the brave commander of the Guides fell, shot in the abdomen, the last man to leave the foot of the hill.



The tribesmen were close upon his body, but the Afridi Company of the Guides, when they saw their Colonel fall, without waiting for orders, charged back and driving the enemy from the spot, led by Lieutenant Maxwell carried the wounded man back. So fierce was their resentment that the officers had literally to drive their men from the spot or they would have re-taken the low hill and held it to the last. But that was not to be, and their gallant Colonel died as they carried him through the cornfields. Across the open, though the enemy crowded behind them into the Maxim and Lee-Metford fire from the 2nd Brigade, the Guides passed, turning to deliver their covering volleys with cool regularity. In the meantime (4-30) the guns had been moved to a spur facing north and were shell- ing the banners which had been set up by a strong force of the enemy on the ridge north of the camp. The action here was general along the line of the river-bed, the Guides retiring slowly to a knoll above their entrenched camp in front of the ferry. As they fell back the masses of the enemy moved parallel with them, but at such a distance that the Derajat Battery which had now come into action, could not get them at a nearer range than 1,400 yards.

4-45 P. M.—The heavier fire then slackened, thought desultory firing has continued well into the night. Considering the numbers of the enemy and the amount of ammunition we expended our casualties are very small,—Colonel Battye and three Guides killed, seven sepoy wounded, and one missing; 4th Sikhs, one sepoy

wounded, Gordons and K.O.S. Bs., a few wounded—numbers not yet to hand. Captain O'Leary, Chief Signalling Officer was hit by a spent bullet, but is unhurt.

The Guides remain entrenched in camp across the river to-night, a company of the 4th Sikhs under Captain Falcon, and a Maxim having been ferried over to help them. The guns remain in position above the ferry, too. To-morrow at day break the Guides are to be with drawn, the 4th Sikhs covering the movement.

The following is a more detailed account of the Guides' retirement, written later :—

The Guides crossed the Panjkora by the raft bridge, without kit, the evening before Easter Eve, with the orders to destroy all the defences southwest of the bridge, it being the enemy from these defences which had harassed the line of march and the baggage during the preceding days. In the early morning (Easter Eve) the Guides started away, and commenced to carry out their orders to the letter, though the bridge had been carried away behind them. When they had set in flames all the villages on the plains, they ascended the big hill to the west and found a thickly populated valley behind it. The column then divided into three parties, and the work of devastation continued, all fortified places being burned when practicable. They were only troubled by desultory shots so far, but it was about this time that the enemy perceived that the bridge had gone, and that the column was cut off from support from the main body, and

they began to bear down on the Guides. A helio message even now was received by Colonel Battye to continue to carry out the orders of the preceding evening, but it was soon countermanded by an order to retire on the camp. Then Colonel Battye determined to send his column down from the summit of the hill in three parties. Lieutenant Codrington took the left party, Lieutenant Lockhart the centre, and Captain Campbell the right, Colonel Battye remaining with the right. The left party found an easy descent and were unmolested, consequently they were soon upon the river's bank. But the enemy pressed the other two columns severely, and they could only retire slowly, helping each other with a flanking fire when possible. It was at this period that the guns in support from across the river first came into action.

The centre party under Lieutenant Lockhart was forced to climb round a precipitous corner of the spur it was descending and in doing this it became hidden from the right party and Colonel Battye having lost all connection was compelled to wait. Thus the right party made a long stand which gave the enemy the opportunity of closing up, while the centre party was descending the other side of the spur on a fairly good path. Colonel Battye evidently feared disaster for the centre party, having lost touch with it, and the conditions of the hillside making the reports of the firing sound as if the force had become stationary; thus Colonel Battye was under the impression that the

party had been cut off and surrounded, and it was not until Lieutenant Lockhart had descended clear of the precipitous descent, that Colonel Battye was assured of the safety of his party. Lieutenant Codrington, seeing that the right party had ceased to retire, ascended the left spur in support of Colonel Battye, while Lieutenant Lockhart retired and took up a position on the right to cover the retirement of the other two parties when they should cross the open. Owing to the stand half-way up the spur the enemy simply swarmed above Colonel Battye's party, and poured a heavy and continuous fire into them, only they fired high, otherwise the casualties of the Guides must have been very heavy indeed. The fighting down the last hundred yards of the spur was most severe, at times almost being hand to hand. The Guides behaved splendidly, retiring in order and covering their retreat with a steady sectional fire. Their worst place was the last few yards as they reached the plain as here the foremost of the fanatics were able to pour their fire down into them from above, being secure from the flank fire from the covering force across the river on account of the ridge of the spur, and their proximity to the Guides. It was here that Colonel Battye fell and two of the sepoys. When the sepoys, especially the Afridis, saw their Colonel fall, spontaneously, and of their own accord, they fixed bayonets and turned to rush back, and avenge the loss of the man they loved as a father. They rushed with a shout and won back the ground to the foot of the hill and were able to carry their Colonel

back with them, and we could see the officers throwing them back by the collars of their coats. It would have been a mad charge, but a brave one. The party was then able to re-form and retire steadily; once the open plain was between them and the enemy, the Maxim and Lee-Metford fire from across the river stopped all of the tribesmen who tried to follow to the Jandaul River and Lockhart's party on the flank cleared the way up to the hill sides. But if the 2nd Brigade had not come up to cover the retreat but few of the Guides would have got back to the river. The marvellous part being that so few were hit: the excitement of the enemy alone can account for the few casualties—fifteen in all. But it was a day in the history of the Guides and an honourable one.

*Panjhora River, April 14.*

From the force of the enemy that collected on the hills after the Guides had retired to their entrenched camp, and from the tom-toming and firing which continued well into the night, and taking into consideration the isolated position of the Guides on the pebble shore, it was considered probable that an attempt would be made to rush the camp before the moon rose, and in anticipation of such an attempt two Companies of the 4th Sikhs, the Derajat Battery and a party of the K.O. S. B.'s were left in position on the opposite bank. But the enemy confined itself to firing occasional shots into camp, only a couple of sepoy's being slightly wounded. From information received on the following day it appears that we were right in surmising that the enemy

intended rushing he triver-side camp, for a captured Pathan gave the following story :—

It was not until the watchmen on the hill-tops saw that the bridge had actually been washed away behind the Guides, that they determined to attack them. Once the news was out, the Mallas preached hurriedly to the collected hearers, that "Allah had given them their chance, and that they could now have a thousand rifles and ammunition for the taking." Even the severe handling by the supporting force did not stay them ; and at night-fall three thousand were waiting in the cornfields for the signal to rush the camp. "But," said the prisoner, " suddenly the night was turned into day and then again and again, and our courage forsook us!" The "night into day" was the effect of the star-shell which the Derajat Battery sent over them. And thus the Guides were saved from a tight place. That they would have come out all right one is confident, but they were tired fighting men, who had fought all day and who had not tasted food for 48 hours.

But at daybreak the enemy opened a severer fire and succeeded in finding the range, a well directed volley hitting Captain Peebles, commanding the party of Devons with the Maxims and a soldier of the party. Captain Peebles was hit in the abdomen, the wound being a very serious one ; the soldier was hit in the knee. Strange as it may seem, after they had kept up a severe fire for about twenty minutes the enemy retired completely, so completely and rapidly that the Guides and a few companies of 4th Sikhs that had been crossed

were able to take up the whole of the frontal position without firing.

The tactics of the tribesmen are inexplicable, one day they will fight with the tenacity of demons and the next for no apparent reason they will evacuate without firing a shot the positions. This they did at Khar Kotel, Swat River and again to-day at Panjkora. The only reason that one can imagine is a want of generalship or commissariat. The latter alone it cannot be altogether, for a hillman could carry a week's rations on his back with ease. It is probably their unitarian system of warfare, but of this I am confident that if there had been some system of defence and a single man of military genius at the head of the tribes we would not have been as far forward as we are now, slow as has been our advance.

The general opinion in camp still seems to be that it was a mistake to have sent the Guides across with the orders which they received to invest the outlying defences ; I repeat my opinion, it was a mistake inasmuch that the bridge broke, and they went out a weak column without support into a country known to be hostile. If the bridge had not broken it would have been different. The fact that a regiment retired in good order inflicting heavy loss in its retrograde movement will probably be reckoned a defeat throughout the length and breadth of the Swat, Bajour and Barawal valleys, and although the whole brigade became heavily engaged, yet it was only at long range distances, the river preventing the crowning successes which are

made at short range after long range fire. They say that we killed many of the enemy; it is doubtful at the range, and certainly the casualties of the enemy cannot work out well on a percentage taken of ammunition expended.

Therefore as we are dealing with a fanatical people it is not surprising that the authorities are highly displeased that we were drawn into yesterday's unfortunate action. The Guides themselves behaved splendidly, and their retrograde movement was an honourable feat, so coolly and decidedly was it carried out; but it is hard to make a half-wild fanatic see this. In fact, when Colonel Battye fell, his men without orders turned and with bayonets drove back the advancing tribesmen quite a hundred yards, while the body of their commander was being conveyed from the spot. After this, they resumed their steady and unbroken retreat.

Last night it was in orders that the Guides were to be withdrawn in face of the enemy. This would have been the last straw—but the order was changed at midnight and the aggressive was continued by brigading the 4th Sikhs across the river with the Guides to-day, under Colonel Dempster. The crossing naturally has been tedious as there were only three mussack rafts, and one raft could only cross eight men at a time.

A message is reported to have come in from Umra Khan to-day in answer to our ultimatum mentioned in yesterday's letter, but nothing has yet left the confidential "hoi of holies," so there is no news of Fowler.



to be obtained in the camp. Colonel Battye's body has been sent back to Mardan for interment. He is, I believe, the fourth brother that has been killed on active service. They say that he absolutely courted death, and during the retreat was the last man to leave each position. Captain Peebles is one of the smartest men in the service, and next to Maxim, the inventor, is said to know more about machine guns than any man in the world. His wound is very serious, and little hopes are entertained of his recovery. The bullet, a Martini one, passed right through him.

*Trans Panjkora Camp, April 16.*

It has been impossible to write from here for two days. First my kit was all across the Panjkora, and I at headquarters stranded and not allowed to cross the river; and secondly, the rain was descending in torrents. No happy succession of circumstances. In fact, the last forty-eight hours has been a real bad time for everybody. The Chin-Lushai campaigners had a wretched time, but there are several who have been at both campaigns who say that we have had more discomfort here. But it is over, and it is fine again. The great news is that Fowler came in last night, dressed as a native, and escorted as far as our picquets by a strong escort of the Khan's troops. Thus, one is forced to believe that the Khan is satisfied with the answers to his three questions. There is no doubt that Umra Khan is a shrewd and long-headed man. Everyone knows that it was at his instigation that the tribes rose, in fact, one is almost sure that the

Khan himself prayed the Mullahs for the *Jehad* to be preached. But with the capture of the two British officers he at once perceived the trump card which had come into his hands, and he has now used it effectively. Fowler and Edwardes have been well treated and cared for, and now the Khan sets up as their best friend, as the man who has saved them in their peril, and in the face of the invading army he returns them to their own. Thus he turns on the men he has instigated in to opposing us, and saves himself. That the Yagistan tribesmen are much incensed against Umra, Lieutenant Fowler himself tell us; and when the Khan restrained them from fighting after the Guides' retirement, they turned in a body upon him and menaced him. In short, there was nearly a fight among themselves. Fowler corroborates most of the other stories. He and Edwardes were treated well; but there is no doubt but that they were prisoners. They both speak well of Umra and his brothers, but allow that at times their position was a "creepy" one, and that they feared for their throats more than once.

The Panjkora River has proved the *bete noir* of the expedition so far, and it has shown how inadequately our engineers have been equipped for a mountain expedition. When the Sappers are forced to fall back upon the telegraph wire for material for a suspension bridge something is wrong. The heavy rain so swelled the river that it became impossible for raft navigation even; there was an accident, and the G. O. C. stopped the rafts. The accident happened in this wise; two

Maxim men of the Devons, a Sikh and two Attock boat-men were crossing, when the raft suddenly caught the edge of a raft suspended in mid-stream and capsized. One of the Devons succeeded in regaining the raft when it righted and the sepoy grasped it, but could not pull himself up on to it; one of the boatmen swam into the shallow; but the others in the water were drowned, the man on the boat being swept down the current. General Gatacre, who saw the circumstance, at once galloped as hard as he could over bad ground down to where the Sappers were making the suspension bridge lower down and he was just in time to tell them there that the raft was coming. Major Aylmer, V. C., at once went out in the suspended basket, and as the unfortunate soldier was rushed beneath him he clutched him. The embrace was mutual, and after a great effort the man was saved; but the sepoy who was jamed between two mussacks was lost.

That evening there was consternation in the advanced post camp composed of the 4th Sikhs and Guides across the river; they were signalled to throw all ammunition into the river and to recross. But just as they were ready to comply, the order was cancelled and as orders stand, the force will advance to-day.

Altogether we were delayed seven days at the Panj-kora River, that is from the day the advanced guard of Waterfield's brigade arrived, to the day upon which General Gatacre's brigade crossed by Major Aylmer's Suspension Bridge.

The most important events after the 10th you will see by the past narrative were the action in which the Guides were engaged, the arrival of Lieutenants Edward's and Fowler in camp, the bridging of the Panjkora and the direct negotiations with Umra Khan through the agency of Major Deane's Native Assistant, the Shahzada Saheb, who actually had interviews with Umra Khan at Mandia. Both the released officers expressed the opinion that Umra Khan did not mean determined resistance and in the first letter which arrived in camp they expressed this statement, and in a later letter sent in by Lieutenant Fowler he again expressed himself as believing that the Khan was "all for peace," but that he was troubled by the Yagistan levies. This undoubtedly was the case, there is no doubt but that the Khan entertained a hope of resisting our arms until the Malakand, and Swat Valley engagements proved to him the futility of such resistance. Then naturally he had trouble with the men whom he had summoned to fight. Besides it is probable that the countenance which he is reported to have received from Afghanistan became less tangible as the time for action approached; for the position of Afghanistan and its present relations with our Government would not allow of open countenance to the resistance shown by the Khan. That the Khan should choose to abscond under the alternatives with which we presented him with, was only what one would have expected, as the terms presented to him were stringent and absolute.

There is another point which may be noticed here. It is just possible that the three days lost in the Swat valley through the changing of the transport and the passing of the two leading brigades altered the whole working of the campaign. Certainly this deplorable delay, necessary as it may have been, in all probability wrested from General Low's force the honour of having relieved Chitral. As events proved themselves Chitral was relieved ; but if by any chance Kelly's force had been delayed and the fort had fallen, the delay in the Swat Valley must have called out great censure. If one brigade only had reached the Panjkora two days previous to the date upon which the advanced guard of Waterfield's brigade arrived, they and their baggage could have easily forded and another complexion would have been put upon the operations. But after the delay the Panjkora was found unfordable : and Colonel Kelly relieved the beleagued garrison !

There is no doubt that the news that the enemy were advancing in mass from the direction of Mandia Khan with insignia of war was more or less unexpected. Certainly Colonel Dempster, the officer in command of the frontal position beyond the river, had no information, and I left the Guides' camp, and worked across the Jandaul River by myself to find the Mountain Battery (No. 2) pushing on towards the front as fast as it could. Stewart one of the subalterns, told me that the enemy were reported to be in force in front, and that Gataore's Brigade was crossing the bridge. Almost immediately I met General Low and his staff climbing

over the Panjkora Pass. Here the information about the enemy was confirmed, and I was given a message to take back to General Waterfield. I was thus able to get back to the wire. So unexpected had the news been that I brought General Waterfield the first intimation that an action was imminent. Then it was that it was regretted that the 2nd Brigade was so scattered, for the K. O. S. B.'s were occupying the ridge on our left where the Guides' fight had taken place, and the 4th Sikhs and Guides Infantry were brigaded with the Maxims two miles to the right front. Consequently General Gatacre's Brigade being concentrated was pushed through to take the initiative, and it here gained the lead which it maintained to the end.

*Panjpora, April 17.*

Orders last night were that General Waterfield's Brigade should lead off over the bridge and make its way up the valley, to be followed by General Gatacre's Brigade when all the baggage was clear; and the head of the 3rd Brigade was pushed across the bridge after the King's Own Scottish Borderers had passed over and had taken a position on the left flank. Then news came in from the front that the enemy were in force three miles down the valley towards the village of Miankalai, a little removed from Umra's stronghold. Headquarters being across the river and the leading regiments of General Gatacre's Brigade apparently being handiest, (though the Guides and the 4th Sikhs were prepared to advance straight on the flank of the enemy's position) they were pushed on to the scene of action.

It appears that a reconnoitring party of the Guides Cavalry pushed on to within a couple of miles of Mandia, Umra's stronghold, and a messenger came from the Khan intimating that he was sick, and unable to visit our camp. Captain Nixon, who was with the party, then wrote him a letter in Persian, when suddenly the low hills were lined with men and banners, and shots were fired at the party. Information was at once sent back, and the Guides retired a little and then answered the desultory fire of the enemy with a carbine fire.

The 4th Gurkhas and the Seaforth Highlanders were the first regiments up, closely followed by the 25th Punjab Infantry, a party of Sappers and Miners and No. 2 Derajat Mountain Battery. The latter deserves mention for the smart way it came up over very bad ground and got into action. They fired the first shot at 12-5 P. M. The position of the enemy and the disposition of our force being as follow : The right bank of the Jandaul River slopes up gently to a ridge of low hills, which spur out from the big water-shed of the valley. There are several forts and defences on the slopes ; and more on the spurs, which were strengthened with *sangars* and breast-works. Across the river the valley bordered on a little plain before it entered the opposite water-shed. In this plain was a defence behind which lies Umra Khan's stronghold. All the above-mentioned positions were occupied by the enemy, and a few scattered bodies were seen in the plain. But whether the enemy

was in force it was impossible to ascertain, though from the fire one was inclined to think that they were not. The guns opened on the defences on the lower ridge known locally as Mamu Gai, while the Gurkhas on the left and the Seaforth Highlanders on the right crossed the river and made a detour to occupy the lower spurs. They were supported by the 25th Punjab Infantry ; the Buffs, who then arrived, remained as a support to the battery to cover it from the attack of a few men who were seen on the hills on the left bank.

The original idea of the Gurkhas seemed to have been to work up into the higher range and thus to outflank the enemy's position, but they were not allowed to do this, and after taking the first spur they were ordered to make a frontal attack on the parallel spurs before them. This gave the enemy on retiring the advantage of escaping onto the higher ground ; and they promptly took advantage of this. But they showed no stomach for the fight, and they retired rapidly before the advance of the Gurkhas and Seaforth Highlanders, some making for the heights above, others crossing the river at the far end of the valley. There was no serious resistance upon any part of the line, and by four o'clock the enemy had been completely turned out of the valley and the Gurkhas, Highlanders and the 25th Punjab Infantry bivouaced on the different heights they had seized. Our casualties show how light the fighting was, as we only lost four Gurkhas and one Seaforth Highlander slightly wounded, four troopers and twelve Guides' horses hit.



While allowing that all the advantages of the campaign have not been upon our side, and that we have been called upon to face an enemy armed with breech-loading weapons upon their own ground, they being cragsmen and used to hill warfare, while we only had the advantage of superior arms on our side and discipline, one can to a certain point appreciate the reliance which in all the engagements has been placed in the support by artillery fire. But in the action of the 17th it is just possible that too much was left to artillery fire for there is not a doubt but that if the Gurkha Battalion had been sent at once to crown the topmost spurs that they would have prevented the enemy from taking a final refuge there and they must have driven them down to cross the river, where the cavalry, risking a little, could have dealt the tribesmen a lesson which would have been final in the campaign. As it is, yesterday's action taught them nothing, as no greater loss was inflicted on them than is usual in their own inter-clan raids.

The four preceeding actions had clearly shown that once the enemy were "on the run" it was easy to keep them moving and at a minimum of risk. Now, in this engagement they left their positions even before the guns had found them and they never allowed the infantry up nearer than four hundred yards; and when they made up their minds that they were beaten, which was very early in the day, they swarmed across the river, in the direction of Mandia Khan. Now the general opinion is that where cavalry were known to

have such moral effect upon these tribesmen, that it would have been right to have risked a certain amount with this arm. For if the Guides Cavalry and the squadron of 11th B. L. could have reached those crowds of enemy crossing the river and the plain beyond, such a lesson would have been taught the tribesmen that would have been remembered in Bajaur for decades. And the ground was possible for cavalry ; it presented difficulties, but a skilful cavalry officer would have manœuvred over it. Further the Buffs were kept inactive with the guns, and the 25th P. I. never came into action. Two Companies of the Buffs would have been sufficient to check the few men who appeared on the hills on the right flank of the position the guns had taken, and if the remainder of the Regiment had been pushed up to the support of the cavalry the position of the latter would have been under the circumstances, abso'utely secure. The numbers of the enemy were considerably less than the force which had been absolutely routed by our cavalry at the Swat passage and the circumstances were almost indential as to the knowledge of the country. At Mandia this opportunity of delivering a decisive and crushing defeat was offered and it was not taken. This is one of the disadvantages of bringing into action officers who had not the advantage of judging the effect made upon the enemy by all arms during the previous engagements. There is no doubt that the action at Mamu Gai gave the least satisfactory results of the five regular engagements in which the force took part.

I was still living with the 4th Sikhs at Sado so I wrote my wires detailing the action and determined to push back to the telegraph office which was at the bridge with the 2nd Brigade. Hoping to save a couple of miles I left the road by which the 3rd Brigade baggage had come and tried a short cut to the Jandaul River. I had gone back about four miles and was skirting the Jandaul River preparatory to crossing to the range of low hills held by the Sikhs and Guides when my path took me down a *nullah*. Suddenly I found myself face to face with a small group of armed men seated on the edge of the *nullah* above me. I surprised them as much as they surprised me, and there was only one thing to be done, which was to gallop and run the gauntlet. I rode all I knew and the whole party fired as I passed. I didn't look back but pressed on at the best pace I could get from my pony, to make as much distance before they should get their second volley in. Two of them fired again, so I presume that only two had Martinis. It only lasted a few seconds, but it was a close thing, and I thanked Providence that neither my pony or I were touched. I was riding a little 13-hand bay Arab which I had bought in Bombay a couple of months before the campaign commenced. He galloped me out of this difficulty like a race horse. We reached camp about an hour after this incident, bringing the first news of the day's engagement.

*Mandia Khan Fort, April 18.*

The whole of General Waterfield's Brigade were

across the bridge at Sado last night, and at daybreak they marched to be able to operate with the 3rd Brigade towards Mandia Khan, Umra's stronghold. By seven o'clock the head of the brigade marched in below Mamu Gai, where the headquarters camp had been pitched the preceding night. Rumours from the front brought in scant information, but the news pointed to the flight of Umra Khan and his followers. Orders were issued at once for the 2nd Brigade to advance up the valley, the 3rd Brigade on the right bank of the Jandaul River, the 2nd Brigade on the left, the two columns advancing parallel to each other. The Guides Cavalry and the 11th Bengal Lancers furnished advanced-guards. By eleven o'clock the fort of Mandia Khan was reached by the advanced-guard of the 2nd Brigade, and Miankalai, which is the village actually opposite to the fort, by the 3rd Brigade. Not a shot was fired, and it was found that Umra Khan with all his people had fled to the mountains. The fort was absolutely deserted and only a few timid cultivators remained in Miankalai. The fort shows little of the fortification which we heard had been carried out by Umra Khan; it is an ordinary big square fort of the country surmounted with four flanking towers. It is a little bigger and in better repair than those forts we have passed hitherto, but as a defence it is suited only for the arms of the country and a single battery of mountain artillery could raze it in a couple of hours if they found the range. It is built of stone taken

from the river's bed and plastered in with mud. The fort itself is little more than a walled-in village intersected by alleys.

The place though cleaned out of all moveable property, was characteristically dirty and might be called a combination of picturesque carving and filth—the most interesting places being Umra Khan's ladies' quarters, the Masjid, and the attic in which Edwardes and Fowler were shut up. The latter is a little 12 foot cubicle, reached by a ladder and perched on a parapet over-looking the main wall. It contains two small windows, but is about the airiest room in the whole fort.

The enemy had left little behind them, but we found the two brass cannon of which we had heard so much. One is an 18-pounder and the other a 12-pounder; they appear to be of Oriental manufacture of a very ancient type, they are not even fire-worthy. But a curious find awaited the search party of the 11th Bengal Lancers, for a letter was found in an exposed place, as if intended to reach us, from a Bombay firm offering to furnish Umra Khan with every modern pattern of war machine, at reasonable prices from a 35-pounder quick-firing gun to Martini cartridges. The letter was accompanied with photographs of several of the latest patterns of ordnance in action. It was dated June or July, 1893, and the enterprising firm was, named McDermott. As there was no show of defence or enemy the two brigades halted for the day on either side of the fort. Later in the day news was brought

in that Robertson and the force at Chitral were in a bad way, General Low therefore determined to despatch a flying column to their relief. This to consist of the Buffs, the Derajat Battery, the 4th Gurkhas, with a few Sappers and Miners, General Gatacre taking command in person. The haste is so great that they left camp last night for Barwa and they should be into the pass to-morrow, reaching Chitral, if all is well the eighth day. The other half of Gatacre's Brigade will follow as rapidly as it can, while the 2nd Brigade will hold the line of communications from the Jandaul Valley to Dir, Dir being three marches from here.

For those connected with the press the stay at Mandia Khan was to be but a short one. I had gone back several miles to the Telegraph Office and I did not return to Mandia until it was dark. The first man I met in Camp was Captain Shakespeare, the Provost Marshall, and the important news which he gave me was that he had just been flogging ten drabis for having burned an out-lying village. I left him and went on to the Intelligence Officer's tent, and of course there was no news there; but luckily I met General Blood, who very kindly asked me into his tent and then told me that the Chief Political Officer had received a letter from Chitral which stated that the garrison was in a very bad way; that they were reduced to short rations; were fighting for their water; and that the enemy had pushed mines to within 15 feet of the fort curtain. In consequence of this news, General Low had determined to send a flying column

under General Gatacre to force its way to the beleaguered fort ; if possible to reach it before the 25th of the month. The Buffs and 4th Gurkhas had been chosen, being the two fittest regiments (so said General Orders) together with the Derajat Mountain Battery and Aylmer's Sappers and Miners. This force I found had already marched from Mandia and had probably reached Barwa that evening.

*Baral Banda, April 21.*

Owing to news received from Chitral, General Low determined to send a flying column, which, lightly equipped, is to do its best to reach Chitral by the Lowari Pass. The 3rd Brigade was leading at Mandia Khan, so General Gatacre was given charge of the relieving column, consisting of The Buffs, four guns of the Derajat Mountain Battery, Lieutenant Caine's Maxims, the 4th Gurkhas, and a party of Sappers and Miners under Major Aylmer. The force left Mandia on the night of the 18th. I was therefore behindhand, and as it was imperative that I should catch up the column, I went straight to the camp of the 4th Sikhs, where I was living, to make arrangements to start at daybreak. I had been contemplating the purchase of another pony, and now it became imperative that I should buy one. The mare I had in my eye was a "spoils of war" belonging to one of the regiments in camp. They had come by her under rather peculiar circumstances. On entering a village half way up the Katgola the headman had come out and presented them with a mare which he said that

Mahamad Shah, Umra Khan's brother, had left with him, during his flight from Captain Wright's squadron on the day of the Swat engagement. It appears that Mahamad Shah, contemplating flight had a relay of animals out upon the road. The Regiment in question appropriated the mare. Well, I closed my bargain and purchased her, she was a strong little Herati mare, dun in colour, and very well made. As a hill pony she has no equal, and I never regretted having purchased her. Then I made my arrangements to follow the flying column in the morning. Luckily I found an escort for my baggage, as I met Lieutenant Cockerill, Intelligence Officer's, baggage waiting to leave Mandia under escort. But myself I had to go alone, and when three miles out of Mandia I again ran the gauntlet of the enemy's fire. But it was at long range, and as the valley was broad and clear it was fairly safe. About three miles further on I caught up Lieutenant Cockerill's escort, and a mile further we came upon the rear guard of the flying column. We passed on up the valley to Barwa which was the place in which Edwardes and Fowler were detained so long after they were brought into Jandaul. Here Umra Khan had built a new fort, but it was in no wise superior to any other of his forts, or more adapted to withstand artillery fire. At Barwa we picked up more definite news of the flight of Umra Khan. We learned that he had gone to Asmar where for some time he had prepared a place of refuge, and where all the goods and chattels and munitions of Mandia had



preceded him. It appears therefore that he had contemplated flight from the commencement of hostilities. Or had been a wise enough general to prepare for it.

On the 19th we marched down the N.-W. end of the Jandoul Valley. This is the most fertile portion of Umra Khan's territory, and might well be compared with the Vale of Kashmir. It is wooded and well-watered, and the inhabitants are agricultural; in fact, they are clever irrigationists, as all the mountain burns are banked up and dammed, so as to flood the tiers of cornland, as they rush down to join the larger streams in the valley centre; many varieties of English flowers exist, the land is red with poppies and the groves are white with iris lilies. There are cherry and poplar trees, the former now in blossom, and a thousand and one trees and plants that we were familiar with in childhood.

But once the valley head was reached, our troubles began. From fertile freshness the hill we were to cross rose sheer away in rocky barrenness, and the column in places had to make its way over places which, but for the work of the Sappers, would have shown no sign of a path. The ascent which we had to make from the valley was nearly 5,000 feet, over a path, which in places was barely passable for mules. The ascent was gentle, except the last 2,000 feet when it became precipitous.

The lack of generalship, on the part of the tribesmen so evident throughout the campaign, was brought to a climax at Janbatai. If there had been a spark

of military genius among any of them, a mere handful, armed with rifles, could have detained the force for days, as no pass, not even the Malakand, was so adapted for defence as this hill. The great point which would have been in their favour is that they would have been safe from artillery fire until most of the steepest ascents had been won by our men. Luckily the tribesmen had no Generals, and the troops managed to struggle up, while it was day light, but the baggage animals could not, and three-quarters of them remained for the night upon the mountain side, and the same portion of the force bivouaced upon the summit of the Janbatai Pass without kit, food or coats. The Buffs went down the other side of the pass for a distance, but the Derajat Battery and the Gurkhas bivouaced on the summit of the hill. The cold was cruel and cutting, and with empty stomachs the best that officers and men could do was to sit the livelong night round bonfires. It is hard to describe the time we had on that exposed hill-top in the cutting north wind and the snow on the peaks that overhung us. It was cruel.

There was an incident or two worthy of mention during this march. The first is connected with an innocent nest of bees. As we were passing a mud hut beside the path when three-quarters of the ascent had been accomplished, a little Gurkha espied a bee-nest. It took him perhaps a couple of minutes to extract the honey, and he went on his way rejoicing. But the path which passed the hut was very narrow

and the first mule that followed after the Gurkha was stung. Down the *khud* it went at full gallop, and so the whole line. Those little bees played havoc, they were no respecters of persons. Colonels, Majors, Captains, Subalterns, Soldiers, Drabes all got stung in turn, and at last even the redoubtable transport officer raging at the block of his animals, was sent rushing down the *khud* after them, stung in two places. Perhaps many of the discomforts which we suffered that night for want of food and kit was due to the innocent forage of that little Gurkha.

The other incident was connected with some *doombas* (mountain sheep) the joint property of the General Officer Commanding the flying column and the Political Officers. Somehow these said sheep strayed and were never found. Many a hungry officer thanked his patron saint that night for a mouthful of mutton : but the brigade orders the next day layforth some very stringent orders under the marginal heading of *loot*.

The morning brought a more cheerful prospect : the descent was easy, and by twelve the whole of the baggage was past the summit of Janbatai. At three the column moved on through another lovely valley, the way becoming more wooded and picturesque as we advanced. The roads are bad, in places of the worst, and it will cost Government lakhs to make a mule path fit for ordinary rapid traffic. At night the division encamped at the bottom of a valley and allowed the baggage up.

Beveillé sounded at 4 A. M. and we commenced our

march towards Dir. The road was still precipitous and steep, in places becoming appalling ; but the Company of Sappers in front made the path at least passable. As the march continued the country became more and more wooded, and the slopes down towards the beds of the rivers more shelving and precipitous. We had to cross three Native bridges, all structures of the most flimsy kind ; in fact, the bridges of Bajaur are but balanced logs, lined with litter, and as one sways in mid air one wonders that they stand the weight, or that mules can be brought to face them. But the mules are getting used to strange times and places now.

#### NEWS FROM CHITRAL.

At intervals of about four miles we passed fortified villages and strongholds, thus showing the kind of existence these people are accustomed to. These forts are all the same square block buildings, made with stone and mud walls of four feet thickness, the four corners surmounted with flanking towers, which command the curtain, both walls and towers being liberally loopholed.

The frequency of these towers and strongholds points to a feudal system and a supremacy of the strongest status, much as existed in Europe in the earlier centuries.

It was prophesied that we would not make Dir on the 21st as it was a 20 mile march. But General Gatacre had made up his mind, and, even though a heavy hill thunderstorm broke over us, yet the

Sappers, the leading sub-division of guns and the Gurkhas got through, the Buffs and details camping three miles in rear. We encamped about a mile from the citadel, and found in waiting a deputation from Sharif Khan, the newly installed Khan of Dir, with many supplies, such as goats and *ghi*, and cooked food and delicacies for the British Officers. It looked as if the expedition was in for a spell of bad weather, but luckily the weather cleared before mid-night. It was this evening that we received the true news about Chitral. A Native runner from Dir brought the great news from over the pass that Sher Afzal had raised the siege, and that he and his retainers, to the number of two or three hundred, had fled to the hills of Kohistan.

Glad as we were that Robertson and the garrison were safe, the members of the flying column could not but feel regret that we had not been allowed the opportunity of directly raising the siege by our forced march. Indirectly, of course, we have been the cause, because it was the news that we had crossed the Janbatai Pass, backed by the presence of Sharif Khan's men, that caused Sher Afzul to fly. Gul Mohamed with the Dir men, to the number of about a thousand, is still upon the trail of the flying Sher Afzul; but I fancy that the latter will get clear away much as has done Umra Khan. The good news from Chitral of course changes the whole complexion of the campaign, and the mission of the flying column has been fulfilled. Whether or not Sher Afzul and Umra are to be hunted no one knows, but one would think not,

because once off the road and on to their hill-tops they become as the proverbial needle in the bottle of hay. In fact, it is probable that only a very small force will cross into Chitral at all.

The march which the flying column did on the 21st deserves notice, as everything taken into consideration it was an excellent performance. Approximately 20 miles were covered by the whole column, and so much certainly was covered by the Sappers, battery and 4th Gurkhas. Over a rugged mountain path and through a storm which wetted the men to the skin, yet there positively was not a single case of sickness throughout the column and only three of sore feet, and it must be remembered that on the 20th a similarly severe march was done also. This says much for the marching powers of all arms, and is worth reams of theory. The spirit, too, has been wonderful.

The little Gurkhas especially deserve credit for the spirit which they displayed throughout the day's march. They carried no coats, yet though they were drenched to the skin they but treated discomfort as a joke, and never so much as a grumble crossed their lips.

*Dir, April 22.*

To-day we marched the one mile into Dir citadel. The roadway was lined with crowds of natives of the place anxious to gain a view of the first "Feringhis" that have ever set foot within the place, except Edwardes, Fowler, McNair and the army of Alexander of Macedon. We marched in to the music of the pipes, and the walls of both town and fort-

ress were lined with bands of sight-seers, staring open-eyed at the sight which Umra Khan had told them was a moral impossibility. They seem delighted that we have come, or rather that Umra Khan has been belittled and driven out. Dir itself is a valley on the banks of a feeding stream of the Barawal River. In the centre of the valley is a conical hill, and upon this is constructed the stone parallelogram fortress which is the Khan's stronghold. Opposite, on the side of the hill, the city (save the mark) rises in tiers of mud flat-roofed huts: the valley is shaded and wooded, and now is a mass of emerald green owing to the bearded wheat being up. The people seem quiet and listless, they are of poor physique, and do not give the impression of being warlike, though a man this minute has just strolled into camp, with a Martini rifle and Scottish Fusiliers officer's belt. Possibly they are cleaner than the Swats, but there is little to choose between them. They seem friendly and confidential enough, and are coming in readily with eggs and such like supplies. The Buffs marched in at about 12 o'clock with their bugle band. This music seemed to impress the inhabitants greatly, and they again flocked out to see the regiment of white "Feringhis" and their strange music. As one now looks down over the plain amid the bustle of a settling camp, it seems hard to believe that no European had been here before yesterday evening.

Probably you will be surprised that I have made so little mention of Lieutenants Fowler and Edwardes

ince they arrived back in camp, but the authorities have been responsible for my silence. As soon as the officers returned they were warned to keep as much of their news to themselves as possible, consequently very little trickled through. What the object of this obstinate policy of secrecy has been none of us can devise; but it has been, and that is all. As far as I can gather both the captured officers have to appear before a court of enquiry, and they are not to make their story public before this. In the meantime they both have been attached to regiments for duty, Lieutenant Edwardes to the 4th Sikhs. Their story does not differ greatly from the narrative given by the sepoys except in one or two points. They seem to have been treated well on all hands, as far as Natives could treat them well.

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NOTE.—Now that the Court has acquitted both officers, it may not be amiss to comment upon the difficulties which press correspondents found in their way on this particular campaign. No favouritism was allowed to any especial paper, I allow, but undue suppression was put upon all telegraphic matter from the field, that is, messages were sometimes detained as much as forty-eight hours. Not because the wires were not clear, but because state news was to have a long start from press news. Consequently matter got to the press offices through Simla before we could send it direct from the field. Thus it was that we in the field even if we risked our lives to get our news in, were absolutely handicapped out of the race. In fact on several occasions correspondents who got back with news, fed the official wire, while their press news was being detained. This, of course, was heartbreaking to an enthusiastic man. And one was well able to appreciate why one well known English correspondent returned from the Afghan campaign disgusted. As a correspondent if I had been dependent upon the official channel open to me for information, I should not have supplied my papers with a column of telegraphic matter during the eight weeks I was across the frontier.—L. J.



*Dir, April 23.*

As I hinted yesterday the change in the complexion of affairs at Chitral has altered the orders of General Gatacre's flying column. In fact we have ceased to be a flying column, and have halted two days under the shadow of the Dir trees ; and this morning the Seaforth Highlanders caught us up, so by this evening the whole of the 3rd Brigade should be here. The weather is simply wretched, and our bivouacs were washed out again last night, disproving the information of the official blue-book which said that there was little rain in this country. The discomforts and hardships which the troops have had on the line of the present march are as hard as any of the old campaigners here have experienced. This morning a half battalion of the Buffs, a company of Gurkhas, and two mountain guns pushed on five miles ahead, and road-making is going on apace. This is said to be the worst time of the year to cross the 'Lowari Pass' as the snow is melting, and for about seven miles it will be knee deep and soft. In fact, it is generally feared that several men will be frost-bitten, as it is the wet snow slush which is more dangerous than the hard frosted snow. Umra Khan crossed with several thousand men in January, but then the snow was hard ; but generally these things are exaggerated, and we possibly shall get over all right, if we have to go over at all.

A rumour has drifted up to us here in Bajour that a strong party in India is in favour of our withdrawal

now that we have practically opened out Bajour, Jandaul, and Lower Swat. Rationally, I don't see how this is to be done, lest the last state of the country is to be worse than the first. Our march through the land though successful on every hand has shown our weak points, and if we leave now, Umra Khan is bound to be a man again. He will not forget that Sharif Khan seized his opportunity to oust him from Dir, and when it again becomes incumbent upon the Government to send another expedition, (for history will repeat itself) the Khan will know that our weak points are bridges and baggage, and that we could be severely checked if not stopped at the Kamrani and Janbatai Passes.

If Umra Khan and his few thousand followers had withdrawn from the Jandoul Valley and crowned the Janbatai hills, we certainly should not be at Dir now, even if the whole division had moved up to the foot of the pass. The curious part of the whole campaign is that the most strategical positions, and the most defensible have been left unguarded. For my own part, I don't think that Umra Khan meant fight when once he saw the Swat forded. But another time he may, if we have to repeat the present errand, and then our bill of casualties will exceed one per cent. of the men engaged. That he will carry bad feeling against Sharif Khan is only natural, for the amount of wounded men who have come into us here at Dir, show that there was fighting before Sharif Khan turned out Umra Khan's adherents. Moreover, he will have an

eye for the 1,000 rifles which are to be supplied to the feudal Lord of Dir. I should think that there was only one course open, and that, though expensive, absolutely necessary, this is, to establish strong posts along the line that will be the road until our influence is sufficient to perpetually handicap Umra and any other influential tribesmen.

Annexation would entail expeditions for the subjugation of Bonair, Kohistan, Upper Swat, and Ahmed Khel, and the ultimate good reaped from such a heavy undertaking would not equalise the expense incurred. It is a lovely country and an agricultural one; but it is tight bound, so to speak; it would only remunerate in tea, coffee, and fruit. Its worth as a mineral country I do not know, but I would consider it as a country short of Kashmir and in front of Kumaon. From Chitral over the Lowari Pass may be a strategical point on our frontier, but it is an open question if it is of vital importance; and the further this expedition, now reduced to one brigade in the line of advance, goes, the more is one impressed as to the impossibility of a European army far removed from its base entering India by this route. The question, therefore, is, is it worth our while to make Chitral our advanced post with the object of covering the Jallalabad-Chitral route to India or not. The former means spending lakhs on a mule road and holding all the countries above-mentioned, and incurring immense expense. The latter means trusting to the natural line of defence of the country, and the more one sees of expeditions towards the

Hindu Kush, the more one is impressed with the natural security of our North-West Frontier.

*Kalandicamp, April 26.*

Although the greater part of the spirit has been taken out of the expedition now that the Chitral siege is raised, yet there promises to be much of interest on the other side of the big range of hills which we shall cross to-morrow. General Low and staff came into camp yesterday at Dir, and General Gatacre there received orders to cross the whole of his brigade, instead of the small column which had been intended for the relief of Chitral. The news from Chitral is stirring, but you will have had the story of the 3rd of March sent you from Simla long before this reaches you, so there is little object in repeating it,\*but it appears from Robertson's letter that they have done excellently well, as well as Englishmen could do, and so must have Colonel Kelly's column. We can appreciate here what kind of country Colonel Kelly traversed. I assure you that the so-called Dir-Chitral road, over which the advanced guard and the Sappers and Miners passed before the latter corps made it, was barely a sheep pass on the mountain side. In places the sides of the khuds were sheer, and the way lay over a flimsy scaffolding attached to the face of the rock and apparently supported by nothing. Mountain torrents, falling in places two thousand feet in five miles, have to be crossed upon flimsy bridges which sway and rock even

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Do tails of the siege are given at the end of the volume.

with foot passengers. In the last march the country has grown wilder and grander. We climbed our way first on one side and then on the other of the huge watershed of a deep valley : in places where the sides were less steep we found a few *gujar's* huts, but the general landscape was short holly, brushwood and firs. Lower in the valley where there were clearings, the wheat crop was plentiful, though considerably more backward than it was at Dir even and in the Jhandoul Valley. In the lower clearings there were many fruit trees, apricots especially, and though these men of Dir had never seen and marvelled at a rupee, yet they have been taught the art of grafting, for I find all the saplings of fruit trees grafted. Further, to give them credit for intelligence, they have discovered the power of a moving volume of water, for I have noticed dozens of ingenious little water-mills built over the tributary burns to the big streams. The system of these mills is much the same as the Persian wheel, in that it works upon a spoke-cog mechanism, only revolving the ordinary grindstone instead of lifting water, water taking the place of the manual labour. To meet the villagers they seem a peaceable, childish, and simple people. But in reality they are most pugnacious and blood-thirsty, and every man that I have as yet questioned can show a bullet or sword wound on some part of his person. The fortified villages which one passes at every league or so prove that they are engaged perpetually in some tribal war or another. In fact, as far as I can gather, they are not allowed

to marry until they have accounted for their man or otherwise distinguished themselves in open combat.

The weather is still inclement, and we are constantly having showers of icy rain, which, of course, means snow on the Pass. Doubtless we shall have a real bad time on the Pass, as the sun in the day is beginning to warm up considerably, and that means slashy travelling, but we shall doubtless manage all right, for impromptu snow ploughs are at work, and after a company or two are across and a batch of mules or so, it will doubtless become a better pathway; it may be borne in mind that out of the fifteen passes in Chitral, the Laori is regarded as the easiest, so consider what Colonel Kelly's party must have done.

*Asthreth Camp, April 28.*

From Gujah camp we commenced our march up towards the snowy Pass of Laori. When I say we, I mean the regiments composing General Gatacre's flying column, leaving out the mountain battery, which stayed at Dir, the common report being that it would be impossible to get loaded mules over the Pass. The march to the foot of the Pass was a short one, but nevertheless a severe triedge for we had to pick our way along a cliff-side with barely the semblance of a path to mark where the Sappers had preceded us. This march was on the 26th, and we encamped for the night at an altitude of over 9,000 feet, and passed one of the most wretched nights that we have had since the crossing of the

Janbatai Pass. An icy cold wind blew all night, and showers of sleet fell at close intervals. Luckily the morning broke fine, but with a tempestuous wind, but this presently subsided, and for our march over the south ascent of the Pass we had that peculiar calm which is so often met at these altitudes. A company of the 4th Gurkhas and a half battalion of the Buffs, together with General Gatacre's headquarters, had already crossed the Pass on the preceding day; and on the 27th, at daybreak, the remainder of the Buffs proceeded to cross and were followed by the right half battalion of the Gurkhas at 10 A. M.

A hundred yards from the camping ground brought the column into the snow, which soon became knee-deep on the Pass, and any depth in the drifts. But the passage of troops and baggage animals had flattened down a one-foot broad path, and the ascent at first being a gentle incline, the going was fairly good. It had been intended to convey all the baggage over by coolie transport, but for many reasons this was not practicable, and General Gatacre determined to let the mule transport do its best, aided by what help the few coolies collected could give. After a mile we came to the first bad place, and the mules were falling about in dozens, then we came to the south ascent of the Pass proper, and the going became good and simple again. The scenery was grand—a deep blue sky above, and below one sheet of spotless white, gently sloping up to the broken edge of the

sky-line. On right and left the white was relieved by snow-clad deodars, the stems showing black against the snow, while in many places, where some out-jutting spur sheltered them from the north, grew clumps of mountain ash. All along the centre of the rolling ascent of white, right up to where the white turned into the deep indigo of the sky-line, you could see a black line stretch, perhaps for a distance of three miles. This was the brigade and baggage toiling to the summit. It was such a sight as one sees but once in a life-time. Already the snow was melting, and in places we crossed the drifts with a rushing torrent of snow water seething beneath us. On, on the line crept, the mules stumbling and slipping up, the drabis stamping and chaffing to keep their circulation free.

At last we reached the summit of the Pass, and the giant mountains of Chitral stretched out before us, wooded and black, except where the snow-drifts lay. But it was the actual descent at our feet which interested us most, for the ascent had been comparatively gentle and simple. The descent, on the contrary, was steep and difficult, one sheer drift of snow lying between two spurs. But down we had to go, the trodden path was but ice, and the mules and ponies loosed from their connecting chains slid down for many feet. Most of the little Gurkhas not caring to struggle down in knee-deep drift, sat down, and paddling with their feet slid down for stretches of forty to fifty yards. Yet, strange to say, steep and difficult as was the Pass, few of the mules fell so badly that their



loads had to be removed. The descent in actual snow lasted for three or four miles, and then began another business, which, if not so cold, was almost as difficult. After the snow we came into as magnificent a country as any of us had ever seen in the Himalayas. Our path was a sheer descent down the face of a great spur into a valley, both the approaches to which were wooded with magnificent forests of deodar, Indian oak and fir. One would scarcely like to guess at the girth of some of the trees we passed. But the descent was most difficult, as the drainage from the melting snows above and the passage of the column before us had worked the virgin soil of the forest into a knee-deep slough : more difficult for the animals to pass than double its depth of snow. But the Gurkhas with their kookries lopped off the undergrowth and spread it on the path, and the animals struggled down, though many loads were slipped and some animals rolled down to the brook below. But no mules were lost, strange to say, though many fell. And even when the course of the snow-stream in the valley was reached, no road worthy of the name was found, and we toiled on for five more weary miles over boulders and across cascades and streams until the camp was reached at nightfall. It was a march that none of us who made it will forget, as long as we live. It was only 14 miles, but each mile was every step a labour. People may say what they like about our armies and the under-proof quality of our men ; but for the most part they speak without authority or knowledge of the facts. General Gatacre

should have little to complain of in the staying power of the brigade which he has forced on from Mandia Khan and Miankalai. All arms have behaved splendidly, making their own roads most of the way.

Towards the end of yesterday's march we passed numbers of Dir soldiers returning from the pursuit of Sher Afzul. They are shaggy-looking rips, armed with every weapon under the sun. We saw two sporting expresses, dozens of Martinis and Sniders and several brown-besses and country-made smooth bores of kinds. These men report that Gul Mahamad has captured Sher Afzul on the borders of Kohistan, but no confirmation of the news has been received here, up to the date of this letter. If the news is true we are speculating what will be done with the man by the Politicals. I presume that he will be taken to India and treated much as was the Tongal General, but possibly he will be sent to swell the rank of our expensive exiles. Still we [can get no authenticated news from these passing warriors, who all seem anxious to be back at Dir. One wonders where they procure all the ammunition for their breech-loaders. Some that we have found is not Government made; presumedly it comes from the Amir's arsenal. But for the most part, the Government rolled cases are locally recapped and refilled several times. We shall be forced to stay here a few days before the road is fit to proceed by and before it is sufficiently made to bring supplies along.

From Asthreth two officers connected with the Press, Major Roddy Owen and Captain Younghusband.

succeeded in getting through to Chitral. Myself I was unable to go, being directly forbidden by General Gatacre until he could spare me an escort. The other officers went through without declaring their intention and succeeded. Major Roddy Owen showed the greatest pluck, and he returned through the enemy's country alone and by night. He told me how outside Broz he was overtaken by night, and he deliberately went up to a village and signalled for a guide. He did not know a word of the language, but he succeeded in making himself understood, and a man with a torch accompanied him a short way to another group of villagers. Here a letter was given him, by chance it proved to be for the Politicals at Dir, and then Major Owen had some trouble as no one would continue with him. He took the law into his own hands and chastised one of the Chitralis, and a guide was forthcoming at once. But it was a bold action in a disturbed country, thirty miles from our nearest outpost, characteristic and worthy of Major Roddy Owen.

He also told me another story, which is one of the strangest coincidences that I have ever heard. Major Owen had intended to shoot in Chitral and to seek fame in the Pamirs, and when in England he had written to Captain Younghusband, whom he did not know, for a letter to some one in Chitral. Captain Younghusband had given him a letter to Lieutenant Gurdon, and upon arrival in India Major Owen had posted this letter to Lieutenant Gurdon. It so happened that when Captain Younghusband and Major

Owen arrived at Chitral they were quartered in Lieutenant Gurdon's room, and as these three men sat together, the identical letter of introduction was delivered having found its way round by way of Gilgit.

*Asthreth, April 30.*

The order that we have been expecting ever since we heard the first news of the relief of Chitral has come, and the advance of the column is stopped. That is, practically the expedition is over, and the general opinion is that the halt is only preparatory to a withdrawal from Chitral from this side. Whether Home pressure is responsible for this or not we are unable to say, but doubtless the almighty rupee is at the bottom of the sentimental feeling which appears to be finding ground in some portions of the press. We know nothing for certain, but often unconfirmed information is the most reliable, and the general opinion is that the force will summer almost as it stands, and will then be quietly withdrawn by degrees. Thus, if the Laori Pass is to be held, two regiments will probably form the advanced post at Asthreth, and the rest of General Gatacre's brigade hold posts from here to Janbatai, such as Guja, Dir, and Baraul Banda, and the other brigades in the same way from Janbatai to Jellala, it being considered, I presume, that Gilgit is able to victual and garrison of Chitral.

#### OFFICIAL STORY OF THE SIEGE.

The following are the General Orders issued by

General Low for information regarding the siege :—  
 " On the 2nd March Amir-ul-Mulk, who had been provisionally recognised as Mehtar of Chitral, practically resigned the Mehtarship and made overtures to Umra Khan and Sher Afzul whose forces were advancing towards Chitral. On 3rd March a reconnaissance of about 200 men under Captain Campbell, Central India Horse, was made towards Drosh, and the enemy under Sher Afzul coming on in great strength surrounded the force, which had to fight its way back to Chitral through gardens, the walls of which were occupied by the enemy, firing with Martinis and Sniders at close ranges. Captain Campbell was shot through the knee early in the day, but mounted his horse and remained in command. Captain Baird, 24th Punjab, was severely wounded and was found and carried by Surgeon-Captain Whitchurch back among a party of our men. This party, to make good their escape, had to rush walls one after the other and to turn the enemy out at the point of the bayonet, but the enemy after three or four lessons did not wait to receive the charge. The total loss killed and wounded this day was 56, among whom were General Baj Singh, and Major Bikan Singh, Kashmir Imperial Service Troops, killed. On 4th March the siege commenced, on 8th March the enemy set on fire the water tower, but the fire was extinguished. On the 14th March an attack by the enemy on the east side of the fort was beaten off. On 5th April the enemy occupied a

summer-house in the garden within 50 yards of the gun tower. On the 7th of April the enemy's attack on the water-way failed, and though the gun tower was set on fire, the fire was extinguished at the cost of several men killed and wounded, and Dr. Robertson was wounded by a bullet on the left shoulder. On the 8th the enemy attempted to fire the gun tower for the second time, and on the 11th an attack on all sides on the fort simultaneously failed. On 16th April the enemy's mines had reached to within 30 feet of the walls. On the 17th April a sortie was made under Lieutenant Harley, 14th Sikhs, the summer-house was taken and the mines were blown up, at a cost of eight killed and 13 wounded to us, and about 60 to the enemy of whom 35 were bayoneted. The enemy hearing of the advance of our ally the Khan of Dir and his men, and of their having taken Kila Drosh, fled, and the siege came to an end. Colonel Kelly's detachment reached Mastuj on the 20th. Our total casualties were 101, of whom 40 were killed or died of their wounds. Captain Baird died of his wounds on 4th March, and Captain Campbell and Dr. Robertson were doing well on 19th April."

#### CAPTURE OF SHER AFZUL.

The news from Dir is that Sher Afzul with 700 followers has surrendered himself to the Khan of Dir, and is now at Dir, a State prisoner; he did not pass into Dir by the Laori Pass but by a far more difficult route. The 700 Chitralis being disarmed have been sent under

escort over the Laori Pass, and are expected here to-day. They are to be disbanded to their own homes as soon as they are well into Chitral country. Other news reports that Lieutenant Robertson, K. D. G's., Intelligence Officer, who went with an escort of one Company 2/4 Gurkhas under Lieutenant Hamilton, to survey the supposed route *via* Panjkora River, is severely wounded. It appears that he was cut down by some of Umra Khan's disbanded soldiery when separated from his escort. A company of the 25th Panjab Infantry was sent to bring the party back, taking a surgeon with it. The hills are said to be covered with Umra's disbanded soldiery, and in General Orders the force is warned about leaving camp without an armed escort.

I am afraid that I am behind with the headquarters news, but it is impossible to be everywhere, and when it was a near thing with the Chitral garrison it seemed my duty to go on with the 500 men who were to make a rush to relieve them. Now it seems that whatever trouble will take place will be the work of the desperadoes who since Umra's fall are at large. But the fact that they are wandering about points to the probability that no combined movement is on foot. I leave by the first convoy for Dir, the General refusing permission for me to advance or go back alone and being unable to give an escort. The work of the advanced column has been road-marking, pure and simple; and this has been no mean labour, as the path to Dir from Laori is barely worthy of the name. In fact, it is a marvel to

see the places where the baggage has passed over. Accidents to mules have been constant, and one mule loaded with gun cotton went down the khud for sixty feet ; luckily there was no explosion.

To show what heavy work the Sappers and Lieutenant Hutchinson's advanced company of Gurkhas have had, one rock alone took 20 pounds of gun cotton to move. The disposition of our brigade is as follows : The Sapper',  $\frac{1}{2}$  battalion, Buffs and Lieutenant Hutchinson's Company,  $\frac{2}{4}$  Gurkhas, have been recalled from Badulga to Asthreth. Two Companies of Gurkhas are at the north foot of the Laori Pass, a wing of the same regiment on the other side, at Gujah, and the rest of the brigade at Dir. We await developments.

*Dir, May 2.*

The situation of the Field Force remains unchanged, and apparently no one, from the G. O. C. down to the Madras drabis, knows what are to be our future orders. General Gatacre, with the Buffs and Sappers and Miners, is still encamped in the glades of Asthreth, the only change being that the 4th Gurkhas have gone back to hold the Pass, a wing being at Ziarat on the north side under Colonel Sir Charles Leslie, and a wing at Gujar on the south side, under Captain Malcolm. General Low and most of the Staff proceeded this morning to Gujar, where they will remain two days, unless urgent orders from Simla require a different course. The present orders, as they stand, do not allow General Gatacre to proceed beyond Kila Drosh,



and the column may only proceed there when 15 days' supplies are over the Pass.

Sher Afzul surrendered, or rather came into Dir with 700 followers a few days ago. It is called a surrender, but on the 24th natives of the Dir army reported confidently that he was captured, and a pretty little Oriental picture was complete when word was sent in that Sher Afzul could not come in unless the Khan of Dir went to meet him, and treated him with all deference. In fact, the further one proceeds with the force, the more conclusively is it brought home to one that there is much in Chitral affairs yet to be explained. To all the world and by all the reports, it appears that Sher Afzul has been directly the root of all evil, and that he called in the aid of Umra Khan. Yet we have it on undeniable authority that there is no friendship between Umra and Sher Afzul, and that at one time the friction was so great that Umra actually had Sher Afzul in bonds. What has passed between Sher Afzul and our Political Agent is closely confidential, so I can give you nothing but what I have learned by outside means ; but a conversation which I had with Mohamad Azim Khan, a Khan of the best family of Chitral, confirms my statement that there was but little affection between Sher Afzul and Umra, and the fact of the surrender when a flight such as Umra Khan's was possible, I think goes further to confirm this belief.

There has been some agency at work which is more mysterious than one may expect even in border

troubles, for the nature of Sher Afzul's surrender is an inexplicable sequel to the vicious tenacity of the siege reputed to have been captained by him. Mohamed Azim Khan maintains that Sher Afzul had not the slightest intention of using force against the British party, but that the presence of Umra's men left him no alternative: then, again, the tenacity of the siege remains unexplained, for forced rebels are not, as a rule, enterprising soldiers. There seems much to be explained, and it seems that an explanation must be looked for from across the border. As to the escape of Sher Afzul from Cabul, Mohamed Azim, who shared his exile gives the following story:—Sher Afzul being fond of hawking and *shikar* generally, was allowed to participate in this sport, an escort being provided by the *Kotwal*. These sporting expeditions became an institution, and as no attempt at escape was made, the surveillance naturally grew more lax, until an opportunity arrived, and Sher Afzul and the more important of his retinue got clear away. Of course all this may be a lying story, but we shall yet hear more of the matter.

The seven hundred Chitralis who came in with Sher Afzul were disarmed at Dir, and sent on in instalments with their families over the Pass, to be disbanded in Chitral, a few of the younger men being detained to carry supplies over the Pass. They are a strange and weedy looking race, and might without inaccuracy be described as a dirty people. Their cos-

tume is curious. especially that of the women. These ladies, whose features for the most part are extremely regular, show little beauty, though a few of the younger girls are pretty. Their clothing consists of loose Mohamedan pyjamas, a pashmina shirt, and pashmina, or with the more wealthy, a Chitralli check *chadder* or blanket. Their coiffure is curious, as the centre of the crown of the head is shaved clean, the other hair growing long over the temples and neck, and cut in front into a correct fringe ; some of the women plaited their temple locks. Over the shaven patch a small skull cap is worn, often of worked patterns like a smoking cap. The feet are covered with shoes made of undressed skins, the fur being inwards. Above these, many wear a short stocking more like a riding-boot top, similarly worked to the skull cap. I noticed few ornaments in the way of metal, but a small bag is suspended from the folds of the cloak across the breast by a chain and fastening pin similar to all intents to the medal watches that have become popular among ladies of fashion. Among these Chitralis were many as white in complexion as Europeans, but they are not an inviting race. The men have a costume akin to the women's substituting a choga for the shirt and cloak, and the better class a waist-coat of prepared skin with Russian brass buttons, and a rolled felt cap instead of the skull cap ; the men for the most part shave their heads clean when boyhood is passed. Their utensils are

copper pots of most curious shape, being more or less Grecian, and water skins, made of the whole skin of a small goat. Their saddles are wooden and peaked, the wooded joints being stitched with thick raw leather thongs. They carry their young children upon their backs ; this is done by both men and women. The women have soft voices and good eyes. So much for the Chitralli, man, woman and child.

Sher Afzul was sent back to India yesterday under escort; his presence will now swell our list of paid dependents.

#### THE ROBERTSON OUTRAGE.

The details of Lieutenant Robertson's story are as follows : As you already know, Lieutenant Robertson, with a company of the 4th Gurkhas under Lieutenant Hamilton, was sent to survey the proposed Panjkora route, and to meet Major Barton, R. E., advancing up from Sado. Lieutenant Robertson also was furnished with an escort from the Khan of Dir, and a guide who was called the Kazi, but who was known to have served some time with Umra Khan. This man was armed with a d-b sporting 16 bore, which he had stolen from Umra Khan. Major Barton was met and the party commenced the return journey ; throughout the Kazi guide had been most solicitous in doing his best for the personal comfort of the two sahibs, and had quite wormed himself into a position of trust. Lieutenant Robertson requiring a further sketch of a position, became sep-

arated from his Gurkha guard, and as he rode along, he handed his sword to the Kazi guide. Suddenly a gun was discharged behind him, one barrel passing under his right arm, the other under his left; luckily his body was missed, and the horse's ear only was touched. Apparently the Kazi guide had fired at him at short range. Lieutenant Robertson was off his horse and down the khud in a second, trying to get out his revolver. Once his revolver was out he covered the man, who now menaced him with his own sword. Robertson fired, but the ball, though it took effect, did not stay the man, and his revolver jamming, Robertson was cut over the head. He then closed with his assailant and got him down, but the revolver was hopelessly jammed, and Robertson seeing two more men with their swords drawn made a rush for his escort, which was only a few hundred yards behind. The Khan of Dir's escort and the culprit fled up the khud, and Lieutenant Hamilton was able to do nothing. The wound on Robertson's head is five inches in length, and his arm is damaged.

The Khan of Dir, not unnaturally, was in a terrible state, and he scoured the land, with the effect that the Kazi guide was brought in yesterday. He has a story, his version being that he handed the gun to another man, and that the shots were an accident owing to the carelessness of this man, the rest, namely his attack, being made in self-defence when menaced by the revolver. But it did not save him from being shot last

night by a firing party of the Seaforths. Lieutenant Robertson is doing well.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF CHITRAL.

To the question of further trouble from the tribesmen one can say little. Petty trouble and isolated attacks may occur anywhere between this and Mandia; but the probability of a general *jehad* seems remote, and certainly at the present time improbable; as the fighting men have too much at stake before their crops are n to allow of their tempting providence to the extent of a punishment which would certainly plunge them in ifamine; for though the blue book says that the valleys export one-third of their produce, I personally don't believe that the present capabilities of the same valleys are more than sufficient to stock against a strain on local consumption during a bad season. If the force were to be withdrawn to-morrow, I am of the opinion that but few shots would be fired. But as the force will probably summer in the three valleys Dir, Jandaul and Swat, and be withdrawn towards the end

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NOTE.—It has since transpired that while the G. O. C. exonerates Lieutenant Robertson from all blame; that the Chief Political Officer with the Field Force, in his confidential report, laid stress upon the fact that Lieutenant Robertson in being removed from his Regular escort exposed the force to grave difficulties with the Khan of Dir. A word in defence of Lieutenant Robertson may not be misplaced. The Khan of Dir's men given and received as an escort in good faith were as much Lieutenant Robertson's escort as the company of 7th Gurkhas, and if any blame is to be attached it should fall on the Political Officers for supplying such an escort.—L. J.

of the summer, the acuteness of the lessons given during the occupation will have worn off, and the tribesmen will probably recognise that the force is withdrawing. The question now remaining is :—What to do with Chitral and the permanent road *vid* Laori, Dir and Miankalai to India ? The question is one to be settled by the strategical importance of Chitral, weighing the significance it bears to the Jellalabad route. The latter, one would think, would come in with the explanation mentioned earlier in this letter. Certainly no invading force can materially menace Nineteenth century Hindustan by this route ; our own advance must have fully convinced all military men on this point.

*Dir, May 4.*

General Low and Staff were at Guja yesterday, and a reconnaissance of the Pass beyond was made. The conclusion which Colonel Leech and the Sappers have come to, is that if Government decides upon building the road from Chitral to Dargai, that the Laori Pass can be made passable for troops and supplies all the year round, except during occasional snowstorms, the drift from which would necessitate clearing. This is satisfactory after all that has been said regarding the Pass. Having crossed it twice, I am of the opinion that it is a very simple road-way, taken snow and all when entering Chitral, as the snow ascent from the southern side is a gentle rise, only becoming steep and difficult when the brow is passed ; then the descent becomes sheer. Thus the passage from Chitral into Dir is a very different business from the northern way

But, of course, the difficulties of this climb can be much modified by engineering skill, for owing to the snow the downward path is a perfectly straight and regular descent, whereas if it was, as it will be made, a zigzag ascent, the labour to all traffic will be much simplified. Apparently order have arrived that one brigade is to occupy Chitral some time during May-June. For how long the authorities have not made up their minds yet. That Chitral is to be occupied from General Low's force, seems to point to the supposition that all further movements of the force are more or less demonstrations against Russia, as taken all round the Chitralis are a poor race, and it is now certain that they would never have shown fight at all if it had not been for the influence, and actual and threatening presence of Umra Khan's soldiery. They were placed in the position of making a choice between two evils, and they chose what, at that period, appeared the lesser, *viz.*, chancing, in conjunction with Umra Khan, future punishment, rather than actual and vicious punishment on the spot by the Khan's retainers.

Locally the natives of Dir believe the following history with regard to the combined attack upon our post. Umra Khan, instigated by our ally across the frontier, in the first place summoned Sher Afzul when affairs were upset in Chitral, and made the proposal that he, Umra Khan, should aid with men, and the leaven of war by his presence, and that with Sher Afzul's co-operation the British influence should be



exterminated and Sher Afzul given the Mehtarship, Umra Khan's share of the spoil being the arms and ammunition of the British party. That Umra Khan took his fair share of the ammunition is shown by the store found buried at Dir fort, 10,000 rounds which the natives here say came from the north about a month and a half ago. As sixty-eight boxes were with Edwardes' party there is probably more ammunition of the Khan's still hidden in Chitral, for I doubt if they used all the balance of Ross's store; and that taken from Lieutenants Fowler and Elwardes at the investiture of Chitral fort. The report that the ammunition at Dir is stolen from India, and that it is ammunition that has never been issued is not true; it is without doubt that it is the same ammunition which came down the Pass in February or March.

Regarding the various reports which have circulated as to the present position of Umra Khan, I can give you this information. I sent an intelligent native of Dir, whom I have employed since I have been here, to penetrate as far as he could towards Asmar. The man, though he never actually went as far as the stronghold, had conversations with several of the Khan's followers. It appears that Asmar has been more or less ceded to the Khan, and that he had prepared it as a refuge as soon as he had heard of the intended advance into his country, and as we advanced forward strings of mules daily carried the wealth and munitions of Mandia up into the stronghold. At present the

Khan is in connection with the Amir's men, but apparently he always has been, and I fancy that he is as safe in his connection with Abdur Rahman as he ever was. His actual following at Asmar is not large, owing to difficulties of food, but the Khan is in touch with all those who have dispersed. At present he is content to bide his time, and it is only natural that he does not desire to lose prestige by personally conducting an opposition which he knows in the present case must be hopeless. Thus the story restraint and a guard room in Jellalabad, as has been wired to the Indian Press, is nothing but a myth.

The general health of the troops remains good, the doctors being of opinion that the excellence of the water supply is chiefly responsible for this. The only case of pneumonia with the 3rd Brigade is well on the way to mend. The other cases of sickness are dysentery and sore throat, the British Field Hospital having 23 patients yesterday, of whom four were officers. Lieutenant Robertson's wounds are doing well, except the sword cut on his hand, which has severed several of the tendons of his fingers, but it is trusted that this will be all right shortly.

It has not been decided yet whether headquarters will be Dir or Ziarat beyond the Pass. Ziarat is a charming place and densely wooded with deodars.

*Camp Janbatai (Fortified Post), May 5.*

I had barely got my yesterday's letter into the mail bag irrevocably when I heard the news through the

Political Officer that he had reliable information that Umra Khan had been summoned to Kabul by the Amir, and that he had left Asmar two days previously. The politicals have it that he has gone as a close prisoner, and that his brother Mahomed Shah is detained in restraint behind at the hill stronghold. I at once made all enquiries, and between Dir and Bandia I met a Khan and retinue, and he was of the opinion that Umra had left Asmar under a complimentary *firman* from the Amir. That the Khan could have refused the summons I doubt, especially with the Sipah Salah there near him; but I believe that I am right, and that the local information upon which I have founded my opinion is right, that hitherto the Khan has had the hand of friendship extended to him from over the border. The Amir may find it necessary to change his hand; then it will fare badly with Umra if he is not back from Kabul; but I will stand to my opinion that until the Amir is brought up sharp to explain certain matters, Kabul is Umra Khan's safest asylum.

The change that has taken place in the country between Dir and Janbatai is most striking. All the villagers have returned, and on every side cultivation and irrigation is proceeding as if no army of occupation were present at all. The road, too, is now worthy of part of the name, for it has ceased to be the mere track over which we passed with such difficulty a month ago. Bandia, which is the first post down from Dir, I found held by two companies of the 25th Punjab

Infantry, under a subaltern who had not been in the country more than two months, and who could not speak two words of any Oriental language. The next post, five miles below, was Janbatai. Here was a wing of the 4th Sikhs under Captain Quinn, and the camp of the first of the donkey transport brigade, lying down in heaps after their struggle over the Janbatai hill. I consider donkey transport to be excellent, but it is a shame to overload the little animals, and this is what is being done, as the tiny little chaps are burdened with two maunds, which is a second class mule's load.

A strange story reached me to-day, but which reached headquarters some days ago. It appears that one of the smaller Khans among one of the many fastnesses which are scattered over the Jandoul-Dir valley came in to the officer commanding the nearest post, and reported that three fakirs had gone out into the surrounding country with the consent of the Khan of Dir to raise another *jehad* against the invaders, and with the direct exhortation that no demonstration was to be made by day, but that the posts between Dir and Panjkora were to be attacked simultaneously at night in the name of the Prophet. Though the Khan could not produce the three men, yet he was able to name one, a well known man in the valley, who it was known had left Dir. The story further went into detail to say that the Khan of Dir having captured some of Umra's ladies refused a bribe they offered for their release, and, confiscating the money by worming out the place where it was hidden, handed it over to the

British Politicals, together with the hidden ammunition. At this the influential Mohamedans endeavoured to influence the vacillating Khan, with the result that he was reported to have completely turned. To show what belief was placed in this story, the Khan who gave it away was sent post haste to General Waterfield. Then came the surrender of Sher Afzul. This shows a little of what has to be sifted on the frontier.

I was not able to get back over the Laori Pass in time to be present at the advent of Sher Afzul and surrender of his army, but I was lucky enough to be present for a few moments when an officer commanding one of the posts had a conversation with him. Sher Afzul is a man of about 50, inclined to be grizzled, and he has a prominent or what lady novelists would call an eagle nose. He has the shifty eyes of the Pathan and the manner and bearing of the polite and educated Persian. His face showed the lines and marks of trouble and fatigue, both mental and bodily, and it struck me at once that Sher Afzul had not been the happiest of men during the last few weeks. To add to the sunken and drawn expression of his face the snow had chapped and peeled his lips and nose to a degree. He wore an Astrakhan hat and was shrouded in a Russian military cloak with double breasts, over-covered with brass buttons.

We entered into his tent and found him seated with all his retainers round him, about eight in number. They rose to meet us and salaamed in the Persian manner, and Sher Afzul at once gave up his seat of folded

blankets to the officer who commanded the post. The conversation had to be carried on through an interpreter, as Sher Afzul knew little of Hindustani and Pushtoo, and we knew no Chitralli or Persian.

The officer commanding the post, when all were seated, asked if the Pretender wanted any thing. He was brusque in his manner, and Sher Afzul was not slow to perceive that he would not receive much sympathy.

He asked for bedding and water.

He was told that water and tea had been ordered for him, but "These have been good enough for us to sleep on since you brought us here !" and the officer I was with picked up two stones.

Sher Afzul bowed and said that "the ground would do for him also !"

"You shall have a little straw then !" said the officer.

"Who made you prisoner ?" he was then asked.

"No one—I gave myself up !" came the grave answer.

"Are you a true Mussulman ?"

"By the blessing of God I am !" and he pressed his hand to the region of his heart.

"Does the law of Mohomed teach you to lie ?" said the officer.

This crumpled Sher Afzul, and he bowed his head.

"Your servant does not lie. Hearing that the Sirkar wanted me, I came willingly and gave myself up, otherwise I would not be here !"

"Why, the Khan of Dir surrounded you on the high hill and forced your hand?"

Sher Afzul smiled for the first time. "No doubt the Khan says that it is so, but I am now here, what more can I say then!"

"What induced you to fight against us, what hope had you of success?"

"I assure you that I had no wish to fight. I had no alternative; I was forced in many ways," and he was the ill-used man in manner again.

"I fear you are playing with the truth again!" said the officer. "But have you had a bad time of it lately?"

"I can assure your honour that I have not known what sleep is for weeks!"

"Where is Mohomed Isa?"

"Either at Kalam or Uchu!"

"Shall we be able to catch him?"

Sher Afzul shook his head. "I don't think so, he is a very clever man. If I had not been a friend of Government I should have been with him."

"What about Umra Khan?"

The whole expression on the man's face changed, he lost his benign look, and an expression of deep enmity took its place.

"I do not want ever to set eyes upon Umra Khan again. It is he and his works that have reduced me to this. He forced me into this trouble!"

"But he is a fine soldier, is he not; he knew what he was doing?" said the officer.

He seemed surprised at these sentiments, and he answered resignedly. "Well, he is for ever an enemy of mine. He is no man. He told us to fight; he made us fight and lose our countries; he buoyed us with promises, and when he was called to defend his own home, he fled like a fox. He has not even *resisted* you. But it is all *kismet*!"

We saw that he had had enough of the interview, and Lieutenant Edwardes then coming in we left; but we saw that he recognized Edwardes and was pleased to see him. The tables were turned in their case now.

*Mandia Khan, May 5.*

The work which has been done at Mandia is simply astounding, and in the one short month since we left it has changed into a veritable cantonment. On the north side of the Fort has sprung up a native bazaar, while on the south is a storage ground for the advanced depôt which the Commissariat has pushed forward. The stronghold itself has completely changed, several of the towers are gone, the summits of the flanking towers are removed, and from inside, one would never believe it to be the same place that the 11th Bengal Cavalry first occupied. The whole of the pent and outhouses have been removed completely, and nothing of the interior buildings are left except the mosque and those houses of better architecture which were Umra Khan's own private dwelling places. The Ordnance Park is now lodged in the body of the fort. The Lines of the Gordons, K. O. S. B.'s, Guides, and 4th Sikhs—except that several detachments are out



along the line of communications—are much where they were, but their conditions are changed also, for all have their tents, and both officers and men are as comfortable as one can be with the heat in the day 110 deg. under canvas, and a difference of fifty degrees in the temperature towards morning. The heat is simply terrible, and it is certain that the British troops will not be able to stand it much longer. In fact so convinced of this are the Brigadiers of both the 2nd and 1st Brigades that parties are already out looking for spots upon the higher hills to which to remove the British troops for the summer. Mandia is now a veritable cantonment with its bazaar, commissariat stores, and shops, for a sporting Parsi has come up with a store of sorts.

There has been no fighting in Mandia or Miankalai since the flying column went forward; only occasional shots have been fired into camp, one bullet being reported to have passed through General Waterfield's tent. It appears that only two or three fanatics followed this sport, but they succeeded in shooting two sentries on their beats, they shot a man of the K. O. S. B.'s and of the 25th Punjab Infantry dead in their tracks from a few yards distance, so they must have crept up very close to them. To secure the sentries against this stalking the Guides Cavalry made counter-stalk, but were unsuccessful. Colonel Denspter made a short demonstration with the Guides Cavalry and his own regiment into the Salazai valley, but without having any effect on the night shooting. Then certain headmen of the neighbouring villages

were forced to keep guard in company with our own sentries, and then the Khan of Nawazai came in with his following and the firing dwindled away.

Every species of transport is now to be found between Dir and Dargai—mules, ponies, bullocks, camels, and donkeys. Donkeys are being used largely, but after what I saw at the Janbatai Pass I am afraid not with the success that was expected from them. Donkeys are excellent transport animals if properly loaded and driven, the greatest part of the secret lying in the driving. If you ever meet a drove of donkeys being driven by their owners, you will see that they are always allowed to go their own pace, and that the drovers never hustle them, but that they remove their packs for resting periods about six times during a march while the donkeys find food. Thus treated the donkey, if slow, is an excellent transport animal, since he finds his own food almost in desert places. But driven as mule he can never be a success, and it is shameful to give him the same load as a mule is asked to carry. I saw a drove of donkeys after their packs had been removed at Miankalai; they had in nearly every instance bad sore backs. But except for the donkeys the transport seems to be doing excellently, and the compressed *dhooosa* is being pushed forward rapidly. Between Miankalai and Chakdhara on the Swat I must have passed nearly seven thousand transport animals in one day. Amongst these were the Jey-pore and Gwalior transport. The former with their drabies in rifle green tunics and turbans, and in general

smartness of saddlery and animals they form the finest looking transport that I have seen upon the force. Whether pony transport is the best still remains a moot question, but for work on the flat like that between Malakand and Janbatai it must be excellent, and from my own experience I have found that a pony can go where a mule cau, and that he has more heart. In Persian caravans ponies lead the transport. A pony is more difficult to feed and loses condition more rapidly than a mule, which is a distinct disadvantage in hill warfare.

Miankalai to Panjkora is now a fair and open road, and as safe to traverse as the Parade at Brighton. A month has worked a marvellous change. I crossed to-day the very corn fields where the Guides were so pressed, and stopped almost at the spot where Colonel Battye fell. The empty cartridge cases were still lying about, yet the scene had completely changed. A party of ribald Gwalior drabies were passing, joking, and singing over the place where young Maxwell turned to carry his dying Colonel back, and the very bearded barley which had been cover to the enemy was now being reaped by apparently peaceful husbandmen. Such is war !

The 13th Bengal Infantry are at Panjkora, and though Aylmer's bridge is still in use, yet another suspension bridge has been added. The new bridge is a beautiful piece of work with nearly double the span of the first bridge. It has been built by Captain Sergeant, R. E. But it speaks well for Major Aylmer's

work that the hurried bridge, which he manufactured out of door posts and telegraph wire in 48 hours, should still be carrying traffic. It is certainly a wonderful piece of engineering.

*Dargai, April 10.*

One was prepared for changes in the geography and appearances of the country after all that one had seen between Mandia Khan and Khar. But the complete change in the Malakand Pass and Kotal is beyond all expectation. To make clearer the immense changes which have taken place here a further description of the Pass as it was on the night of the 3rd April should not come amiss. When the mixed party of Gordons and K. O. S. B's. who had had the severest climb reached the higher *sangars*, they were just in time to clear the defence which was flanking the advance of the next column on their right. Coming up under the cover of a watercourse they were practically unseen by the men in the *sangars*, and about the only bayoneting during the assault was done here, only a few of the defenders being able to make their way above. The advance upwards from this point was a little less tedious, as a rough road passed (afterwards found to be the historical road) through the *sangars*; but it was an advance under a dropping fire, for the Pathans retired up the hill face slowly, firing as they went. Once on the summit the party collected their energies and then rushed the main position and followed the enemy out of it into the wooded land behind, driving them be-

fore them. The fighting here was perhaps the severest of the day, for many of the fanatics, feeling that they were turned from their position, stood, determined to die rather than fly. There was no formation on our side and the columns had spilt themselves up into parties and were engaged amongst the trees and boulders indiscriminately; therefore it is impossible to describe the action with accuracy of detail. In one corner, a party of Gordons met with a determined resistance, so determined that one Gordon was killed and two mortally wounded before the nine fanatics were settled. When the top of the Kotal and woods seemed to be fairly clear the men rallied back on the centre village, and the Bedfords and Dogra, who had come into action on the right over the cup-dip of the Kotal, passing through the fighting line, took up the pursuit and drove the enemy up and over the face of the opposite hill. As I said above, there was little formation maintained throughout the assault, the company officers each leading their own little battle irrespective of support or the position of the other columns, in fact for the most part leading their men straight for the nearest defence which was actually above them. This does not refer to the Bedfordshire Regiment, which during both its main attack in support and its pursuit maintained an excellent formation, the whole of the attacking line being under control. When back to the Kotal, we found the village in flames and war-begrimed parties searching in the grass tents for what they could find. Most of the men who

had made the main assault were now coming in parties from two to six and collecting in the cup-plateau which is upon the summit of the Kotal, many of the men being so done that they were glad even in that early hour (3-30) to snatch a few moments of sleep. Working back to the head of the main pathway, which many have called "the Pass," the way was strewn with bodies, showing that the tribesmen had died hard even after being driven from the shelter of their breast-works. Just at the head of the Pass was a small stone *ziarat* (tomb), and upon the altars and grave-mounds within we found the bodies of two of the enemy. They had evidently been carried there from the fight; one of them, an old man with a long white beard, had been horribly lacerated in breast and body by a shell. He was still breathing spasmodically, we could see by the motion of his long white beard. The other was a younger man; he was quite dead from a gun shot in his neck. Afterwards it transpired that these two unfortunates were most influential Mullahs and tribal leaders.

By 4 p. m. the head of the brigade and the Mountain Batteries began to come up the Pass. A few steps over the summit, and the sad scenes of war began to present themselves. First a party of the Rifles were burying one of their comrades, and then on every side one heard the shouts of medical assistants to let their doolies pass. The scene on the side of the Pass and below in the valley defies all minute description. The face of the hill was covered with

baggage and pack animals doing their best to find a path by which to ascend. With difficulty, owing to the crush, the parties of Sappers and Miners strove to make the impassable places of sufficient foot purchase that the mules might pass. Below, a dense mass of baggage cattle was collected in the stream, not in hundreds, but in thousands, for the baggage of both brigades was waiting to file up the narrow pathway; while along the valley one could see a line of advancing animals, swelling the crowd below as they wound in from Dargai. It was a marvellous sight.

Then the strange order was given that the 2nd Brigade was to come down from the summit of the Kotal. This order was obeyed and the confusion began. Already the Pass was crammed with the up-coming baggage of two brigades, and the crush and confusion was such that the Engineer officers had to use force almost, to allow their men space to make the road. To this was now added the downward tendency of the two thousand fighting men of the brigade. For the mules the passage was absolutely blocked, and so great was the confusion that the doctors could scarcely make headway with their wounded. In fact it was only by handing the doolies down precipitous paths and waterways that any headway could be made at all. Packs were abandoned and mules and ponies taken down almost impassable pathways. The men of Waterfield's Brigade were forced to come down the sheer face of the hill, irrespective of path or purchase way. Such was the scene at the Malakand when night fell,

and it was not until nearly daylight that the Pass was clear for upward traffic, though the transport officers were up all night. And now, why you can ride from Khar to Dargai and back again between afternoon tea and dinner and think nothing of the trip.

On the morning of the 4th April, it appears, the correct road over the Malakand was discovered. This is what is called the Bhuddist Road. It commences from the plain almost at the foot of the Spur, where the 4th Sikhs and Guides made their first ascent, and it continues in a gentle rise to the summit of the Pass, passing across the Kotal about half a mile from the cup-plateau, whence it finds as gentle a descent as it had risen into the Swat valley, meeting the plain about a mile from Khar. The work of the Pioneers has made it into a broad, even cartway, over which, when military transport was not passing, you could comfortably drive a tonga or four-wheeled vehicle. It is called the Bhuddist Road, but I should be inclined to consider it rather to be the work of the Pioneers of Alexander of Macedon, since we are told that he entered India *via* Malakand. There was no object in the Bhuddists building roads, but Alexander had to leave India; and as you ride over the new Malakand and think of our passage of two months ago, you become convinced that the original engineers were more soldiers than priests. There is now a double route over the pass, one for laden animals and the other, the steep one, for empties. At the summit in the little plateau (which I have called the cup-



plateau) in which the 1st Brigade bivouacked after the storming of the Pass, is now a pleasant and well-kept cantonment. The East Lancashire, the 39th Pioneers, and two Field Hospitals are there. I fancy that Malakand will never cease to be a cantonment now. It is a pleasant spot except for the heat, but it must be healthier and more pleasant than Hoti-Mardan, since the evenings and night are cool even if the heat of the day is great. Such then is the Malakand Pass of to-day compared with the Malakand up which we fought our way seven short weeks ago.

# NOTES, INCIDENTS AND ANECDOTES OF THE CAMPAIGN.

The following short anecdotes are mostly in lighter vein, and I give them separately as they do not form part of the serious narrative of the campaign :—

It is ruled that all recognized war correspondents shall show their telegraphic messages to an officer (press censor) specially told off for the duty of examining press matter ; but in the event of an engagement or an inability to be within easy reach of the press censor, you may present your wires for signature to a staff officer, provided he is the senior staff officer, at the post from which you wire once I had occasion to send an urgent wire to England, and the press censor being fifty miles away, I looked about for a staff officer. I found a brigade major busy writing in front of his tent. He must have been engaged upon a most engrossing subject and his mind was far away, for when I put the telegraphic form in front of him, instead of affixing his signature he began to write this sentence " But on active service one never knows what may happen. M. ———, I may be killed—!" Here I stopped him and gently pointed out that although I entirely endorsed his sentiments, yet I did not think that my paper would care for me to wire them at one rupee eight annas a word. \* \* \* \*

It was not until I had witnessed the Cavalry charge at the Swat Passage that I really appreciated the true ferocity of which the human nature is capable. I have refrained from describing the Cavalry charge minutely,

a pursuit by mounted men must always be a terrible thing. But the whole bearing and expression of the Sowars during these brief moments of blood, simply defies description; and once they have started killing it is too hard to stop them. One of the enemy, I remember, lay up in a *nullah* and waited for the leading squadron. He calmly knelt and chose his man and shot him dead; but he could barely have known that he had touched his trigger before he was transfixed by half a dozen lances, and the Sowars were so enraged at the loss of their comrade that they literally hacked him to pieces. Not that the tribesmen themselves were merciful, for one wounded Swati found a worse wounded lancer and cut him up frightfully.

Isolated cases of fanaticism were frequent. As the first troopers forded the Swat and formed up on the far bank, I saw a single man of the enemy waving an enormous red banner, rush down upon the leading troop: he had little idea of fighting, for he rushed straight upon Captain Delamaine, who passed his sword through him. Amongst the wounded of the enemy was found a little girl of about fourteen. Of course it was an accident. Probably she was crouching in the standing corn. But such things must happen, in war, accidental though they may be.

The marvel is that a third of the cavalry were not drowned as they crossed, the river for the Swat was a torrent and the spray washed over the horses' holsters. Lieutenant Sorel of the 11th narrowly escaped being drowned, his horse lost its footing;

rather, it shied as a bullet splashed into the water beside it : it lost it's footing, and a foot-purchase gone in that flood meant drowning, a Sowar luckily held out his lance and dragged the officer back into his depth.

Five of the enemy lay up under some bushes which grew at the mouth of a dry well. As soon as they found themselves discovered by the Sowars they immediately jumped into the well and dragged a Sowar after them. They were caught in a trap for half a dozen men dismounted and lanced them at pleasure : but it was a curious sight to see the lancers prodding about in the depth of that well. The lance is a great weapon !

The native story was that Mohamad Shah, Umra Khan's brother, was in command at the Swat. He apparently was not a great soldier, for the Chakdhara villagers say that as soon as he saw the cavalry well into mid-stream, he gave the single order "*Bhagho*"\* and straightway mounted his mare, and led the way. The same mare be it said that as I have related in the narrative, I purchased from a regiment who had secured it as loot. The mare is a mare with a history, for on my way to Dir, I met a Khan of one of the Dir feudal villages and he recognized the mare as belonging to Umra Khan and was much interested to learn how I came by her. In fact, he was anxious to buy the animal, as he said that it would be a great thing for him and his dignity if he had Umra

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\* Run for it.

Khan's mare in his possession. And when I was returning to India, the people of Miankalai turned out in force to have a look at the Khan's former charger. \* \* \* \*

The circumstances of Colonel Battye's death have been made more or less public : but few know how poor Peebles was killed. It was the morning after the Guides engagement and the enemy were still in force on the frontal position. They had found the range fairly well too, for though they were firing at about 1200 yards, yet the bullets splashed uncomfortably near us as we crossed on the mussack rafts. About five of us were standing in a group in the centre of the camp, two men of the Guides, one of the 4th Sikhs and one other, talking about the adventure of the preceding day. We remarked that the enemy had found the range. Then suddenly one of the Devon men, working the maxim, was shot; they carried him face downwards towards us, and some one remarked "He's done, poor chap." Then there came the ominous thus amongst our own group and we swung round with the question, "Who's hit?" on our lips. "I'm hit!" said poor Peebles and he pressed his hand to his abdomen; he ran forward a few steps and then fell to his knees and before we could help him rolled over on his back. We thought he was hit in the hand only, until we saw him fumbling at his belts.

"Give me water?" was all the poor fellow could say; Quinn of the Sikhs supported his head and gave him water from his bottle. The poor fellow

lived for about ten hours, the bullet, a Martini one, had passed right through him. It was very sad: only two evenings before, I had sat up with him in the mess tent of the 4th Sikhs and he had told me all about the Gun, for which he almost lived. How he expected to be chosen to fill the post of Inspector-General of Maxims, and three days later I attended the auction of his property. Such is life !

During the same engagement a drabi sitting down on his haunches was struck by a single Martini bullet, which passed through the fleshy part of both arms and legs ; thus the man had eight punctures in his skin from one bullet.

A curious sight was a mounted officer who was hit by a spent bullet. For a few seconds his face was a study, he did not know whether he was alive or dead, whether he should fall off his horse or dismount in the ordinary orthodox manner. He seemed much relieved when he found that he was only bruised.

At Sado the arrival of Edwardes was the excitement of the hour, before the Guide's action detracted from it. Edwardes, who arrived first, as the narrative has already shown, looked little like a prisoner, he was robust and bearded and most picturesquely dressed as will be seen by the photograph which has appeared in one of the home illustrated papers. The sepoys showed a great interest in the returned hero and men would go out of their way to ask if the sahib was the "*Kaidi-wallah Sahib*"\* and then salute with a board grin on

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\* Hindustani. The Prisoner Sahib.

their faces. There was a peculiar incident in connection with Edwardes' beard ; he is a very fair man and his beard consequently is very light. His captors in many cases mistook this fairness for the white of age and expressed surprise at his seniority.

There was a story in camp *anent* the finding of the court of enquiry which sat upon the two returned captives. The following words are put into the mouth of the President.

" Gentleman you have given your evidence clearly and you seem to have had a d—bad time of it."

\* \* \* \*

You can only appreciate the disadvantage of a 40lb. kit when you have to march with no more. To show to what an extent we were reduced the following conversation between an officer, who had been detached from his regiment for ten days, and his colonel.

*Colonel.*—" Glad to see again back again Jones Smith. we shall be able to bathe again !"

Jones Smith was the sole possessor of a bath in the Regiment, and it was but an india rubber bag in which you could wash only one elbow at a time, while the rest of your body got dirty again as you crouched on the ground. It is marvellous how one forgets his cleanliness at altitudes of 8,000 to 10,000 feet, when all water was snow water. I heard a group of officers agree as they mutually tried to get warm round a log fire " that they wouldn't care if they never saw water again !" These were men who in India would have made their servants' lives unbearable if they did not

provide bath water twice a day.

\* \* \* \*

From a soldier's point of view Swat and Bajaur are poor countries. That is to say there was absolutely no "loot." The whole way up the valley there was little worth taking except such necessities as wood, culinary instruments, grain and flour. All Umra Khan's fortified villages we found to be absolutely denuded of all personal property; in many cases the wood work even had been removed. There were, I believe, remarks in Orders about looting, but at Mandia Khan from senior staff officers downwards, to the last joined subalterns, looting and attempted looting was taking place. A party found their way into the inner chamber of Umra Khan's own dwelling place. There was one most interesting room, a little closet with many shelves let into its walls, the carving in this chamber was excellent and every body helped in the general dismantlement by wrenching off a little piece for himself. But except the carving, a few rag dolls and a comb or two, there was absolutely nothing in the fort. One young subaltern in the Gordons, I remember, found a small packet carefully tied up with a coloured string. Jewels flashed across his mind, I could see it in his eye; the same idea struck us all and we watched him as he eagerly unfastened the cover of the packet. There was another cover inside, which also had to be unfastened, and then another—the excitement became intense and we all drew closer round the lucky finder; then the last cover was



opened—displaying a quantity of henna, the red pigment which native ladies put upon their finger nails. It was a terrible blow to us all! Jandaul is a poor country. \* \* \* \*

There were several wretched nights, but I think that the one most marked on my mind was the one which I spent with the 4th Gurkhas on the summit of Janbatai. We crawled up to the top of this bleak hill, about 8000 feet above the level of the sea, and arrived just before night fall, without kit, or food. As long as the sun lasted we were not badly placed, but once the sun went down behind the opposite hills the temperature fell degrees, and as we were in the region of snow, a fire even would not keep the cold out of us. The Gurkhas and the Derajat Battery were the only troops that night on the crest of the hill. The officers of the battery had a small supply of food, we had nothing but three fowls which the sepoys had captured and a tin of cocoa and milk which the Colonel had in his haversack. Courteously, the gunners finding that we had nothing, sent over a tin of soup, army rations and some rice. It was all they could spare from their slender stock: but it meant life to us almost. Nine of us huddled round the fire and watched the fowls and contents of the tins being made into dinner: the fowls we roasted on a stick, and the soup, army rations and rice we made into a mess of pottage. We did not get a cup full each, but what we did get, little though it was, was as nectar. Never have I so longed

for warming food before or since. The memory of that sip is still fresh in my mind and will never be forgotten. And then we tried to sleep, all huddled up in a tiny tent, which had not been pitched with the flaps away from the ground and it was practically useless. A keen north wind was blowing, so our position as we lay upon the stony summit of that hill may well be imagined. Not one of us had a wink of sleep that night. It was the most wretched night I have ever spent. To this sentiment we were all unanimous.

The difficulties of the Laori Pass, the snow pass separating Chitral from Dir, were greatly over-estimated in the beginning. The passage though difficult was not exceptional and the men instead of being frost-bitten on the summit were quite cheery. I remember hearing one man of the Buffs say to his pal, as he smacked his arms after the manner of a cabby: "Well, I like this—it reminds me more of the old country than anything I saw afore, since I left!" This, in my opinion, showed the right spirit.

From the opposite crest of the Pass the descent became sheer almost and Lieutenant Hutchinson's company of Gurkhas slid and rolled down the incline. One sporting *drabi* whose mule was loaded with two rum kegs unfixed the same, and straddling one preceeded to toboggan down; but the keg got up more pace than he had anticipated and the *drabi* passed out of our sight 'yelling blue murder.'

The Madras *drabis* were the only men who broke down in the snow and I saw some of them sitting

down by the path, rubbing their toes and crying as if their last hour had come.

The following is a cutting from a letter written from Dir, about the first of May.

#### THE TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

A word about the working of the Telegraph Department may not be amiss. Mr. Dempster deserves great praise for the manner he has pushed the wire forward; it now being over the Pass, a distance of 120 odd miles from Dargai. A message yesterday came from Simla in twenty minutes, which is excellent for a field wire. The greatest difficulty with which the Department has had to contend is the transport of their posts and the lightness of the latter. Of necessity they have to be light for transport purposes, and consequently they are liable to be broken and displaced. In this manner all the serious stopages have been caused. Camels being the worst offenders as they are proverbially mangy and rub themselves against the posts.

At Sado I was witness of one of the greatest developments of war science that has yet taken place. I had occasion to visit the telegraph tent and I found General Low, General Blood and Major Deane outside; then I found that the line had been cleared to Simla and that the General commanding in the field, was conferring direct with the Commander-in-Chief and the Government with thousand of miles of wire between them. Distance goes for nothing with modern scientific men.

\* \* \* \* \*

The following taken from the *Civil and Military Gazette* goes far to substantiate some of the allegations to be found in the latter part of my narrative. The Lahore paper is noted for its frontier news and as I have said before bazaar rumours are generally contorted facts :—

From Native correspondents we get an interesting account of Umra Khan's arrival and reception at Jellalabad. He reached there with twenty sowars and thirty *peshkhdmte* bringing several mules laden with valuables, &c., including presents for his Highness the Ameer. He was escorted by twenty sowars of the Ameer's troops as bodyguard. Sidar Shah Mohamed, Governor the Kotwal of Jellalabad, and many officials and influential men went to receive him as far as the Jellalabad river. Arrangements were already made for his camping in the Shah's garden, and he was accordingly taken there on his arrival. Umra Khan's sleeping room was nicely decorated, and his own men watched him throughout the night although the Governor of Jellalabad offered to supply a guard. Umra Khan is a spare man of good stature. He was wearing an ordinary white *loongi* over his head, with white clothing and loose pyjamas and shoes of Bajaur make. He had with him a six-chambered revolver, a Martini rifle, a sword and a *kutar*. The same night a grand banquet was given by the Governor in his honour by the express orders of the Ameer, but, although the best and most delicious food was provided, it was observed that Umra Khan ate very little. Noticing this the Governor

urged him to cease brooding and to make the best of things and take his regular meal. In reply, Umra Khan said that his want of appetite was not due to brooding, but it has been his habit to eat little; and he then ate a little fruit. Umra Khan in the course of conversation stated that his misfortunes are due to his sense of honour as an Afghan on behalf of Sher Afzul who was his guest. He had no desire to be on bad terms with the Indian Government, being under the idea from the beginning that his enemies would over-reach themselves, but for the sake of Afghan honour he wished to see Sher Afzul in power in Chitral. He had no expectation that the Indian Government would so soon overrun and occupy his country, for he has done no harm to that Government and had given no trouble to its officers. To convince the Government of his friendship he released the two officers, being under the impression that the Indian Government would show some gratitude in his case and treat him leniently. He added that if he had had a mind to resist the Indian Government he could have done so, at least for a time, for he was sufficiently prepared. His belief that the Government would not treat him badly at least turned out to be incorrect; his fine territories, and specially Dir, of which he was so proud, have been overrun without rhyme or reason, and he had to flee from his country, so dear to him, to Sahu-Nari. On arrival there he heard the bad news of Sher Afzul's arrest, he having been betrayed by a Mian Khel, and further he

learned that the British were trying to arrest him. Then he was sorry for what he had done; it would have been better if he had retained his prisoners and fought to the end, and in that case it would have gone hard with the besieged in the Chitral Fort to save themselves. He dated his misfortunes to the day when Muhammad Sharif was expelled by him from Dir and obliged to seek the Ameer's hospitality, and now the day has come for his own expulsion from his home. As there was no other road open for him he has come to seek shelter with the Ameer, the Badshah of Islam, asking his hospitality through the Sipah Salar, Ghulam Haider. When Khan of Jhandaul he had never shown any friendship towards the Ameer, and now he will see how the latter will requite him and what his future lot will be."

\* \* \* \*

While I was with the force there were one two executions in camp, these being the cases of the Fanatical Mullah of Nowshera, captured at Panj-tora and the kazi who attacked Lieutenant Robertson. The Mullah was a madman for though I did not present myself at the actual execution yet I had word with him while Mr. Waterfield, D. S. B. P., was bringing him in. I told then that he would be shot and his only answer was that "It was in the hands of God." He was shot by a party of the K. O. S. B.'s.

I saw both men shortly before death and they both displayed the most utter callousness and disregard

for the future though both know that their lives were but a matter of minutes. Yet though they died with such fortitude neither of the men would declare their real intentions and both protested innocence. \* \*

Kipling in his excellent works has made us all more or less sympathetic with Thomas Atkins, and the private soldier really is a funny fellow when you have him out on service. A few remarks which I casually heard I have remembered and I think that they are worth recording here.

We were half way up the Malakand, and under partial cover of a rock, the party being halted to gather breath. A big Quarter-Master-Sergeant, a man of nearly 18 stone was labouring up after us. He was a sorry picture, wet through with perspiration from head to foot. In fact he was in the last stage of portly distress. A bullet threw a splash of mud up into his face. Panting, he looked up and shook his fist at the *sangar* above us. "You brutes—brutes if ye was *on the flat*. I'd eat you!" and there was intense feeling in the inflexion of his voice.

A party of Highlanders were washing their belts in the Mardan stream, while the rear guard of the Rifles marched in. A rifleman, evidently footsore, came to the ford astride a hospital mule. A perky Highlander with a very Whitechapel accent cried out "'ullo 'ere comes the mounted Hinfantry: hi never seed mounted Hinfantry on mules afore!"

The rifleman heard: for one moment he was silent, then he reeled out with scathing sarcasm to the kilted one.

"To 'ear yer talk one might think yer was a *Scotchman*!"

The shot went home !

At the same stream I heard another very amusing remark. Two tired Tommies were washing their belts. One of them said to the other, "Bill what is this blooming Humra Khan?"

"I dunno, except that 'e's a blooming nuisance, as these, ere belts show !" said the other.

Just before the engagement at Khar, the Khan of Dir's escort passed us, suddenly one of the Bedford Tommies spotted an old man in the retinue with a long white beard.

"Ello Bill !" he, called out to a pal, "stop that old patriot, pull up is shirt and see if 'es the same old Moses we 'ad our bayonets into yesterday !"

While we were toiling up Janbatai, I heard a man of the Buffs say to his right hand file, with real feeling in his voice. "If these be the 'ills; give me the plains !"

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SUPPLEMENT.

Compiled in chief from the letters and notes of other correspondents with the field force.

Before closing I would like to say a few words about the Guides' action at Panjkora. I alone, amongst all the press correspondents attached no blame to Colonel Battye and I had as my authority General Waterfield and Captain Campbell, the latter being the senior officer of the Guides' Infantry who survived the action. If you will again turn to my second account of the



action, given as it originally appeared in the *Englishman* you will see that all I have said is endorsed by General Waterfield's subsequent letter to the *Pioneer* the letter being written for the purpose of clearing the Guides and their Colonel. Whatever happened, the officers of the Guides may rest with the satisfaction that they were not unfairly condemned before the whole of the Indian Public. And do what they may to screen their criticisms those papers who throw an inference at Colonel Battye cannot get over the fact that Colonel Battye carried out General Waterfield's orders to that officer's entire satisfaction, since General Waterfield himself maintains this. And the Guides were under his direct command.

Of course the General Officer commanding may condemn the orders that Colonel Battye received, but everyone who witnessed the gallant retirement of the Regiment, will feel as General Waterfield when felt he penned the letter which I give below :—

TO THE EDITOR, OF THE "PIONEER."

Sir,—In your issue of the 23rd instant, a letter from your Special Correspondent of 16th April, seems to call for few words from me regarding the late Lieutenant-Colonel F. Battye, Queen's Own Corps of Guides. I personally saw the Guides, with Lieutenant-Colonel Battye at their head, cross the Panjkora River, about 7 o'clock on the evening of the 12th instant, and personally gave Colonel Battye his orders—"To cross the river, entrench himself for the night, and early next morning to advance into the valley to his left

front, and burn and destroy the villages, whose inhabitants had been engaged in firing into our camp, and upon our baggage, as it passed along the river route." The late Lieutenant-Colonel Battye, I am sure did not intentionally exceed his orders, but firmly believed he was carrying them out. There was but one small village, Tyulum Baba, actually on the river, the other villages of the Utman Khel lay behind the heights commanding the river, and I have no doubt that the inhabitants of this villages were the men who fired on our baggage trains ; to reach these the Guides had to go round the lowest spur of the hill to get into the further valley, beyond which they did, and burnt the village they found there, setting fire on their way to other villages they passed on this route, and the inhabitants of which, I have no doubt, took part in firing on our camp at Sado. Though the Guides went further away from their entrenchment than I had expected would be necessary, when giving my order, still I contend that the late Lieutenant-Colonel Battye in no way exceeded his order. As to the second charge of committing a tactical mistake in not retiring when he had the opportunity, before the enemy reached him, I feel perfectly certain that the late Lieutenant-Colonel Battye was a far better judge of what he should do under the circumstances in which he found himself than your irresponsible correspondent, and such criticisms had much better be left to the General Officer commanding the Force, who must be the better judge. I have ascertained from other officers who were present with the

Guides that Lieutenant-Colonel Battye held the crest of the height up which he had retired, only long enough to allow of all his men from below joining him, and to punish the following enemy sufficiently, to prevent a rush over the crest and down the hill; and the way the Guides held their ground and supported their several detachments in retiring down the hill was the admiration of all who saw it and understood their difficulties though they were covered by the fire of the guns and Maxim of the 2nd Brigade and subsequently by the infantry, who checked all further pursuit and annoyance to the Guides after they had reached the bottom of the hill. It was just before this that the gallant Fred Battye, who was always the first to advance and the last to retire, received his fatal wound. The small number of casualties in the Battalion, only three killed and nine wounded, shows conclusively how well the retreat of the Guides must have been conducted under this intrepid leader, who was not only brave as all the Battyes have been, but a thoroughly good soldier also, and certainly not one, as your correspondent has it, to "blood" his men "spoiling for a fight," rather than "bow and retire for the common weal." The above words, though probably not meant to do so, are very much calculated to give pain and offence to numerous friends of the late Lieutenant-Colonel Battye in India and in England, and were uncalled for.

F. H. G. WATERFIELD, BRIGADIER GENERAL,

*Commanding 2nd Brigade, C. R. F.  
Camp Mandia Khan, 28th April.*

## COLONEL KELLY'S MARCH.

*From the "Gazette," Simla, May 25.*

In the Military Department Notifications in the *Gazette of India* the Viceroy, dealing with Colonel Kelly's despatch, says :—This Force, composed of 396 men of the 32nd Bengal Infantry (Pioneers), two guns of the No. 1 Kashmir Mountain Battery, some Kashmir Sappers and Miners, and a small body of levies of Cher Kila, Hunza, Nagar, and Sai, marched a distance of 220 miles over country presenting very great physical difficulties, crossed the Shandur Pass, 12,230 feet high in deep snow, relieved the garrison at Mastuj, twice defeated the enemy posted in the strongest natural positions, and finally relieved Chitral on the 20th April after a most arduous and difficult march.

Her Majesty the Queen-Empress has already signified her gracious approbation of this remarkable exploit, and his Excellency now desires to express his deep sense of the admirable and valuable services performed by Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly and the Officers, Non-commissioned Officerse and men under his command, under extraordinary difficulties, which were so successfully overcome by the spirit and courage of the soldiers and levies under them.

The Adjutant-General in India, writing to the Government of India, says, after briefly sketching Colonel Kelly's previous movements, that the second engagement occurred on the 13th April at Nissa Gol, where Colonel Kelly's force, then 622 men and two

guns, again defeated 1,500 of the enemy under Mahomed Isa in a very strong position.

Sir George White considers that the tactical dispositions of Colonel Kelly were most creditable to that officer, and that but for the ability displayed the loss in attacking such strong positions held by men armed with Martinis and Sniders would have been much greater among the troops and the levies engaged.

His Excellency would also express his approbation of the manner in which the two guns were handled and the excellent fire discipline for the men of the 23rd Pioneers.

No further opposition was met with, the enemy retiring as Colonel Kelly's force advanced. But considerable physical difficulties had still to be overcome. On the 17th April the bridge over the river having been broken the troops had to ford it breast-high at the imminent risk of being carried off their feet. Successfully surmounting these and other difficulties, the force reached Chitral on the 20th April 1895, twenty-nine days after leaving Gilgit. During this period Colonel Kelly and his small force, completely cut adrift from the base, were liable to attack at almost any moment and had to contend with formidable natural obstacles and great difficulties in respect of transport supplies.

His Excellency, therefore, finds it his pleasing duty to publicly place on record his appreciation of the skill and ability displayed by Colonel Kelly in his conduct of this long and arduous advance to the relief of Chit-

ral, of the services of officers who so ably seconded him and the exertions and endurance of the troops, all of which combined to crown the undertaking with success.

The Commander-in-Chief cordially endorses the commendations bestowed on Colonel Kelly and the following officers:—Lieutenant Edwardes and Lieutenant Fowler both of whom so gallantly defended the position at Reshun before they fell into the hands of the enemy by treachery, and Lieutenant Jones and Lieutenant Moberly, whose defence of Mastuj during its investment was conducted with credit.

His Excellency also notices with satisfaction the excellent services rendered by the Kashmir troops with Lieutenant Moberly and the levies, *viz.*, those under Raja Akbar Khan of Cher Kila, the Hunzas under the Wazir of Humayan, the Nagar under the Wazir of Taifu, Sai under the Wazir of Shah Mirzo, and the Punjab levies under Raja Jawhal Shah.

The Viceroy, in directing the publication of the letter from the Adjutant-General, forwarding the letter from Colonel Kelly, transmitting Captain Townshend's despatch on the Chitral siege says: The Commander-in-Chief has expressed his high appreciation of the achievement recounted in the despatch, and his words will, his Excellency feels assured, be deeply felt by every subject of her Majesty throughout the British Empire.

The steady front shown to the enemy, the military skill displayed in the conduct of the defence, the cheer-

ful endurance of all hardships during the siege, the gallant demeanour of the troops, and the conspicuous examples of heroism and intrepidity recorded will ever be remembered as forming a glorious episode in the history of the Indian Empire and its Army.

The Governor-General joins with the Commander-in-Chief in deploring the loss of Captain Baird, General Baj Singh, Major Bikram Singh, and so many other brave soldiers, who fell in the discharge of their duty.

Their widows, children, and dependent relations will not be forgotten by the Government of India.

His Excellency directs that a grant of six month's pay to the Garrison, notified in a separate General Order, be paid to the heirs of those killed as an addition to the pensions to which they may be entitled.

Her Majesty the Queen-Empress has already been pleased to express her gracious approbation of the successful efforts of her troops, and his Excellency desires to tender to Surgeon-Major Robertson, the British Agent, to Captain Townshend, commanding the troops, and the whole Garrison his heartfelt congratulations on their gallant defence of the position entrusted to them, while it is a special pleasure to his Excellency to recognise the devoted aid given by the loyal troops of his Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir.

The following extracts are taken from the Adjutant General's letter to the Government of India :—The exemplary coolness, intrepidity, and energy exhibited by Captain Townshend (on whom the military com-

mand of the troops devolved on Captain Campbell being wounded) and the valour and endurance displayed by all ranks under his command in the defence of the Fort of Chitral have added greatly to the prestige of British arms, and will, his Excellency confidently thinks, elicit the admiration of all who read this account of the gallant defence made by a small party of her Majesty's forces, combined with the troops of his Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir against heavy odds, when shut up in the Fort in the heart of the enemy's country, many miles away from succour and support, from the 4th March to the date of the raising of the siege.

Captain Townshend's diary is a record of arduous work, cheerfully performed, of difficulties encountered and surmounted, and of privations suffered without a murmur by the small gallant Garrison.

Every night officers and men were at their posts or sleeping accoutred ready to receive and repulse each assault.

Every day fatigue parties were employed in strengthening the defences.

The enemy were by no means a despicable force. They were mostly armed with modern rifles and possessed unlimited supplies of ammunition, and the method in which they conducted the siege showed them to have considerable tactical skill,

The careful plans adopted by Captain Townshend in order to defeat the tactics of the enemy are in his Excellency's opinion deserving of high praise, whilst



the whole history of the siege, a brilliant chapter in the annals of Indian military history.

His Excellency refers specially to what proved to be one of the most noteworthy episodes in the siege, *viz.*, the sortie made by Lieutenant Harley of the 14th Sikhs with a small party of his men and the IV Kashmir Rifles for the purpose of blowing up the enemy's mine which had come into dangerous proximity to the Fort.

The sortie was most gallantly and successfully conducted with the loss of 21 killed and wounded on our side, and 60 on that of the enemy.

The Commander-in-Chief deplores in common with the rest of the Army, the loss of the lives of the brave men who fell during the siege, and would especially allude to the death of Captain J. McD. Baird, a gallant and accomplished officer of great promise.

His Excellency also deplores the loss sustained by the Maharaja of Kashmir in the deaths of General Baj Singh, Major Bikram Singh, and other brave soldiers who fell in the heroic and successful defence of the Fort of Chitral.

The list of officers and men recommended for rewards has been submitted separately, but his Excellency especially wishes to the place on record his appreciation of the meritorious services rendered by Captain Townshend and the officers mentioned by him, *viz.*, Lieutenant Gurdon, Lieutenant Harley and Surgeon-Captain Whitchurch, the conspicuous bravery shown by the last-named officer on the occasion of Captain Baird's

death having already been reported in a separate communication.

His Excellency also concurs in the terms in which Captain Townshend is mentioned and certain Native Officers and Non-commissioned Officers of the 14th Sikhs and the 4th Kashmir Rifles.

#### STORY OF LIEUTENANTS FOWLER AND EDWARDES.

In accordance with orders received from Chitral Lieutenants Edwardes and Fowler left Mastuj on the 5th March *en route* to Chitral, reached Buni on the 5th and marched to Reshun on the 6th. On the 7th 50 coolies were loaded with some long timbers to repair a break reported in the road, and a party started out, consisting of Lieutenant Edwardes, Lieutenant Fowler, 20 Bengal Sappers, 10 Kashmir Rifles, and 50 coolies, carrying timbers, ropes and tools.

The party started out from Reshun and followed the road to the near defile. On the left bank after careful search, one armed man lying down among the rocks was noticed through the telescope. It was then determined to search the left face of the hill, ascending high enough to look down into the *sangars* on the right bank of the river. Lieutenant Edwardes sent Lieutenant Fowler to do this, while he remained with the main party outside the defile. Lieutenant Fowler and his party had difficulty in finding a practicable road, but soon got higher than the *sangars* on the bank, which were seen to be empty except for two apparently unarmed men, to whom he shouted, and

made signs to leave, which they did and returned to the village. His party now commenced to stalk the armed man how hidden by the lie of ground, their aim being to get above him.

They almost reached a point whence they would have seen him when a shot came from the right bank, and about 200 men rushed out of the village, where they had been concealed, and made for the *sangars*, Fowler's party, two hundred feet above the *sangars* at once opened fire, hitting three or four and turning some back. There was not room for all the enemy in the *sangars*, and Fowler's men enfiladed one face of the cliff lined by the enemy, firing on the lower party and drove them off, Edwardes in the meantime, after the Adamzads or headmen of Reshun tried to lure him into the defiles, saw some armed men close to the road scrambling up the cliff. He at once shouted to Fowler, almost immediately after which a shot was fired, and firing became general. He then retired his men a little, returning the enemy's fire, which was very heavy, and prepared to cover Fowler's retreat should he be pursued, Fowler, seeing by the direction of the enemy's fire that the lower party had probably retired a little ordered his party to rejoin them. The naik of the party had been shot and he himself wounded in the shoulder. He took the naik's rifle and about 20 rounds of ammunition and the party scrambled and jumped down the rocks under a very heavy fire, two more men being wounded but brought along. It now became evident

that the enemy were also above them on the same hill as the rocks came rolling down, some very close but fortunately no one was struck. Fowler then rejoined Edwardes below, and all retired together. The spur had to be crossed, and the enemy along the hills on both sides were moving to try and cut off the retreat, and continuing to fire. A few volleys were fired, and the party continued to retire as fast as they could, Fowler's syce, seeing he was behind, brought back his pony on which a wounded man was put up. Climbing the steep road up the spur was hard work and the enemy were gaining ground, but the top was reached in safety, and a few men were extended along the crest to cover the descent. Here a Sapper was mortally wounded, but his comrades managed to lift him on to a pony. Another body of the enemy, who had not been fighting before, now appeared above Reshun village and began to fire, they were half right of the line of retreat, so no time was to be lost. Eventually the *sangar* was reached, and Subadar Darm Singh threw out a covering party; another man being shot through the leg *en route* and carried in. It was then found the *sangar* was too crowded, so the well to the left was occupied, and the block of houses to the front. The enemy had begun to occupy the block of houses, but Subadar Darm Singh and 20 Kashmir Rifles, who volunteered for the assault, accompanied by Fowler, charged the village, and the enemy fled at once without resistance. The *sangar* was well placed to withstand a rush, but in this country it is impossible

to chose a position near water, and not commanded. The water supply was commanded at from 800 to 500 yards to front and rear. or had the defenders reckoned on having an enemy armed with Sniders and Martinis to deal with. Even the gun of the country was found to shoot with unexpected accuracy and long range, the latter probably due to the command from which it was fired. Soon the *sangar* became the centre of a hail of bullets, a good many dropping inside. One man was mortally wounded and others hit, a stray bullet also bringing down Lieutenant Edwardes's dog. Three points supporting one another were now being held—the *sangar*, the wall on the cliff, and the block of houses to the front, but such a position could not be maintained when darkness set in, so it was decided to occupy the block of houses only. The Sappers started to make them defensible at once, making loopholes, *sangars* on roof, blocking doors, etc., and filled every vessel with water from the stream still running a little. Before dusk volunteers were called for to bring in the 68 ammunition boxes and wounded. This duty was splendidly performed by the Kashmir Sepoys, and after dusk all was in, as well as ration bags and a few kits. Almost every thing, including the ammunition boxes, were built into the breastworks on the roofs, in order to get cover these being constructed under fire. When it got dark every man went to his post, and awaited the rush which might come at any moment. The men had had no food and little water. The losses during

the day were one man killed, two mortally wounded, and about six others wounded. All the wounded, and every rifle and ammunition box had been brought in. Firing went on all night, and all the next day.

On the 9th, just before dawn, when there was no moon, a determined assault was delivered against Edwardes's *sangar* on the roof, occupied by him and the Kashmir Rifles. The enemy did not find him unprepared, and although they got behind the garden wall at 20 yards, so steady were the volleys he poured in that no man got closer. The din of tom-toms and the howling were incessant, but the dawn showed that the enemy had had enough, and they cleared off, the Pathans going last, abusing the defenders and saying the sword would get them soon. The casualties were four men killed, one mortally wounded, five or six other men, more or less seriously. The number of losses to the enemy could not be estimated in the darkness, and they carried off their dead and wounded. Tom-toming went on in the village all day, and firing was steadily kept up, but no further attack was made ; all the casualties were among the Kashmir Rifles on whose side the attack was directed.

From the 9th to the 13th the *sangar* was closely invested, the enemy trying to get closer, and the defenders firing at any man who showed himself. In this way eight of them were killed for certain and probably many more were wounded. On the British side were wounded one seriously and two slightly. On the night of the 10th, Fowler and 20 men made a sortie and

surprised about 50 of the enemy, who had incautiously lit big fires in their *sangar* for warmth and to cook their food. By taking a circuitous route, Lieutenant Fowler got on their flank behind their *sangar* walls and to ten yards from the fires before being observed and shot and bayoneted 20 of them before they could fly. The suddenness of the attack, and the glare of the firelight in the eyes of the enemy, prevented any serious resistance. Not a man of Lieutenant Fowler's party was touched. While he was out another assault was delivered on the village, but Edwardes's and his men were all at their posts, the attack was repelled before Fowler's party returned.

On the next night an unopposed sortie was made and the water vessels were again filled. The enemy did not care to venture between the *sangar* and the river cliff after their experiences of the night before. At night all the men were always on their posts, half resting while the other half looked out, changing every hour. The water ration was small, but was increased by collecting rain water in water-proof sheets. Then there were the *sangars* and defences to be improved and sometimes altered. The strain on the little Garrison was never relayed for a moment. The wounded required attention. The bodies of the six dead had been burnt in an outhouse, and for the wounded bandages, splints, and crucibles were improvised, Edwardes had a little weak solution of carbolic, and carbolic tooth-powder, with which they made what shift they could. There was not sufficient water thoroughly to

bathe the wounds, but the most was made of it, and pads soaked in carbolic and the toot powder, were put on the open wounds. The behaviour of the wounded was beyond all praise; never a growl was heard, or a complaint.

A well was sunk to the depth of 12 feet, but the rock was then struck, and the attempt had to be abandoned.

On the 13th a white flag was shown by the enemy, who ceased firing, and the defenders hoisted one in return. Two Pathans then came out and demanded a parley. Jamadar Lal Khan was sent to parley. He returned to say that a "Badshah" had just arrived from Chitral with a large following to stop the fighting. After some discussion, it was settled that the "Badshah," Mahammad Isa Khan, should present himself on the side of the Polo ground wall, near the gap in the wall, 60 yards outside the improvised fort, and directly under fire. When he came there, Lieutenant Edwardes went to speak to him, Lieutenant Fowler and every man going to their posts. Muhammed Isa's story was that peace was restored in Chitral, and that all fighting was to cease pending the recognition of Sher Afzul as Methar. He offered a safe conduct to Mastuj, and concluded an armistice, of which the terms were that the besieged remained in the fort, the enemy not to advance beyond their *sangers*: the bhisties of the garrison were to get water, supplies were to be sent, no firing was to go on. These terms were carried out. Some fowls, a sheep, eggs, etc., were sent to the outside walls, by one man, and the bhisties got water.



Vigilance by day or by night was in no way relaxed. Next day, the 14th, all the vessels were filled in the morning from rain water. Muhammad Isa and another big man, Yad Gar Beg, who brought the same story again, had an interview, and the bhisties got water, and more supplies sent. More letters were written to Chitral.

On the 15th snow was lying in the morning, but the sun cleared it off. Muhammad Isa sent in to ask if he might play a game of polo and have *tamasha* on the polo ground. As they would be under fire, the request was granted. He then asked that the officers should be present to join in the general rejoicing at peace having been restored. This was considered, and in the circumstances Lieutenants Edwardes and Fowler did not like to refuse. On the arrival of Muhammad Isa, Yad Gar Beg and a third big man, they both went out. All the men were posted and the exit used was left open so that one man could pass through, and a sentry with fixed bayonet placed outside. The officers went to the usual meeting place, the end of the polo wall, 60 yards from the loopholes. The further side of the polo ground had no cover so Mahomed Isa was asked to order all his followers over. A charpoy with Yad Gar Beg was set in the gap, Muhammad Isa playing polo. Tea and some biscuits were offered and accepted and after the polo a dance was proposed, and the permission by the English officers asked, the custom being for the losing team to dance. The request was complied with. Under the

excuse of a wet place in front of the charpoy, the charpoy, while Edwardes and Fowler were standing up, was shifted just under cover of the end of the wall. It was difficult to object to this. Even then all men sitting on the further side were exposed to fire, and it seemed impossible that any attempt to treachery could be unattended with heavy loss to them. The dance proceeded. It was the usual country dance, and the men pressed up closer, a number moving over to the defenders' side of the wall. Fowler and Edwardes then stood up, and said they would go in, Muhammad Isa immediately threw himself on them, and a rush of men got them down under the wall. Firing began at once from the fort, and was replied to. Fowler and Edwardes were firmly bound and dragged along the ground by men stooping down, so they could see nothing of what was going on. The firing, which at first was heavy, gradually dwindled to single shots. Then men came out from the direction of the post carrying dead, wounded, and loot. The pockets of the two captured officers had been turned open. Their buttons and badges torn off, and even their braces and buckles did not escape. Fowler's boots and stockings were taken off by a Jamadar of Pathans, but the rascal was promptly shot in the head and hand, by some of the sepoys. Fowler recovered his boots through Majid Khan in Chitral, and the Jamadar died later in sight of the officers he had insulted, in crossing the Lowari Pass.

Fowler and Edwardes were then taken to Muhammed

Isa's house, given a little food, and passed the night bound and strongly guarded. They were subsequently sent to Chitral being taken over by an escort of Umra Khan's Pathans on the way.

Reaching Chitral on the 19th, they saw Jamadar Lal Khan and eleven other captured sepoy, who had preceded them, and they were taken to see both Majid Khan, Umra Khan's representative, and Sher Afzul. Both expressed sorrow and regret at the treachery practice upon them, Majid Khan stating that the Subadar who had been present was in prison. Both received the officers very civilly. For the next few days the prisoners remained in Chitral, living in a room with the Native officers, a colonel, major, etc., of Umra Khan's regiment were then there. The Jamadar and other sepoy were in a small room in another block of houses.

On the 24th the party marched for Drosh, and reached it on the 25th and here they saw Umra Khan. He received them very well, but did not say much on this occasion, except that he seemed rather amused when the two officers asked to be released. The next day he sent for them again and asked them what they wished to do whether to remain at Drosh, go to Jhandaul with him, or be sent into Chitral fort. The last proposition was taken as a good joke by the bystanders, but Fowler and Edwardes accepted it, until they were told that none of their sepoy would be sent with them, when they refused, and elected to go to Jhandaul with Umra Khan.

By Umra Khan's permission, however, they wrote a letter to Mr. Robertson, saying that it was the Jhandaul Chief's intention to keep him in Chitral fort till he chose to come out, and then to escort him down to Peshawar.

The next day they started with the sepoy and Umra Khan for Jhandaul, halting for one night only at Asthareth, Dir, and Bundai, and arriving at Barwar on the 30th. During the march the officers were generally supplied with ponies and given the best food obtainable, but owing to the number of men who had been passing through this country, supplies were difficult to obtain until the party reached Dir. The sepoy marched with the party, one Sapper unfortunately dying after crossing the Pass. On arrival at Barwar, the two officers were given very good quarters in a new building half open on one side, and until the people began to fly at the approach of General Low's force they were given very good food indeed. Umra Khan twice took them hawking with him, and was always much interested in what they said, and treated them in a friendly manner.

During the captivity they were always closely guarded, and allowed to communicate with no one except through the Khan. A strong guard of ten men or more, with rifles, always loaded, never let them more than a few yards out of their sight; they slept in the same room and treated them as equals, sharing with them anything they had, and were probably as much for their protection as anything else. The officers

knew, however, that any fanatic with a blood feud might try and kill them at any moment.

When Umra Khan had leisure and was in the same place, they saw him or his younger brother of Dir every day, and they do not believe that under any circumstances the chief intended to be the direct cause of injury to them. On the contrary they consider that he treated them very well, and in a straightforward manner. He gave Lieutenant Edwardes back his own sword, looted at Reshun, which had been sent to Umra Khan as a present from Mahomed Isa, and he promised to try and get Fowler, for him. The two officers were prisoners for exactly a month.

*Report reprinted throughout the Indian journals.*

The following short extract from Mr. E. E. Ollivers' excellent work. "Across the Border" will go far to substantiate the theories of Afghan interference which run through my later letters connecting the Amir's influence with the direct causes of the recent Chitral campaign.

#### CHITRAL.

"Northward of the whole again, the Hindu Kush forms the great watershed between the Indus and the Oxus, the passes of which are probably sufficiently difficult to deter any large army venturing there. But the more we learn about them, the easier it appears to be for a small force to effect a passage in many places, and, having crossed, the rendezvous in some central valley, such as Chitral, the seat of the ruler of Kaskar, as it is sometimes called, which is sufficiently large

and fertile, and thence works southwards towards Gilgit or Jellallabad. The mischief would be almost equally great if the intruders stayed, there, and extended their influence to Kabul or Kashmir, or over the fanatical tribesmen along our Pathan border, a contingency it is obviously necessary to take measures to prevent.

For the same reason it is undesirable these countries should fall in any way under the control of Afghanistan, a dozen independent and rival States between Kashmir and Kabul is at any rate more or less of a safeguard against treachery in either. Amir Abdur Rahaman is known of late years to have been casting a covetous eye in this direction. Their internal quarrels, which in Kaffiristan are unceasing, not merely with their Mahomedan neighbours, but among various sections of the people, he has readily seized upon as an excuse for interference, and there is no doubt this has been supplemented by still more active intrigues. His expedition against Kaffiristan and Bajaur was stopped not so much by the sturdy resistance of the Bajauris as by the Shinwari rebellion nearer home, and his promises to return at a more convenient season have caused a certain amount of uneasiness, for this Amir's convenient season is off-times a bitter one.

It would be well, therefore, in the first place to let it be clearly understood that these communities are to be considered entirely outside the limit of Afghan influence; and in the next to take more active measures to ensure that British influence shall be established

instead. To some extent this has been begun already by the Lockhart mission to Chitral and by the establishment of a resident in Gilgit. It will be assisted by the opening of the Kashmir-Gilgit road, and would be materially increased by the construction of the railway to Dhaka which would enable regiments to move at a short notice in Jellalabad. The States are, as a rule, ready to welcome English officers, Kaffiristan more especially so—a country whose tendencies and sympathy have more in common with the Ayrar stock than any single community along our entire North-Western border.

If the Yaghestan States can retain their independence, well and good, if not British influence must be paramount, and the sooner direct measures are taken to accomplish this the better.

The following two articles appeared in the *Englishman*, Calcutta, and they treat upon two of the most interesting results of the Campaign.

#### THE MAXIM GUN IN THE CHITRAL CAMPAIGN.

The Chitral Relief Force has been remarkable for more than one reason; but chiefly as the first Indian campaign in which both the Maxim gun and magazine rifle have been used. The late Captain Peebles, it will be remembered, took out a Maxim to the Soudan, but he arrived at the scene of action too late to give the gun a fair trial, and owing to a disagreement with the Egyptian authorities he never accompanied any of the columns into the in-

terior. The Matabele war was scarcely of sufficient duration to decide the merits of the gun as there it was not used as a weapon of offence. Consequently we may say with confidence that the storming of the Malakand Pass was the first occasion on which the perfected Maxim machine-gun was used in the offensive against an enemy. It also came into action at Khar Kotel, the Swat River and Panjkora. The passage of the Swat possibly giving the weapon its fairest chance.

At Malakand four Maxim guns came into action, the two belonging to the Devonshire Regiment under Captain Peebles' personal supervision, and those under Lieutenant McAlister, of the King's Own Scottish Borderers. The former are of the old pattern, taking the Martini solid drawn cartridge; the latter of the latest pattern, having the Lee-Metford bore. Now, much has been said by correspondents present at all the actions above mentioned claiming a large proportion of the casualties for the Maxims. But the work of these guns has been carefully watched, and we are in a position to state positively that the practice of the new weapon has been overrated. That the guns killed a certain percentage of the enemy is true, but the majority of the reports of their devastating power were highly imaginative. Since the 1st Brigade has occupied the Swat Valley the Surgeons have been busy tending the wounded tribesmen. Thus we have had exceptional means of testing the accuracy of field reports, which have been further checked by a careful examination of the dead after the engagements.



Among the dead found at Malakand and Khar Kotal there were very few indeed who showed that they had been hit by the Maxim, and it is easy to distinguish the effects of the machine gun, as in nearly every case two or more bullets take effect. One man who must have been hit by McAlister's gun had been pierced by five bullets ; he was still living when found, but there was no hope for his recovery. It is not for a moment suggested that the Maxim is not a magnificent weapon, but there can be no doubt that in this its first campaign, it has proved itself to be but of ordinary significance when used in a hill-country. Strictly speaking the Maxim is a weapon of defence and not offence, and in order to appreciate its real and full power we must see it turned to face large bodies of men attacking on the flat at short ranges. At Swat and Panjkora the difficulty of finding the range with the weapon was most apparent ; and when found the difficulty of keeping it was also great owing to the mobility of the enemy, and the fact that he did not remain long in mass. Moreover, the positions occupied and re-occupied on the hill-side by the enemy were scattered, and difficult to embrace in Maxim fire. As for the moral effect of the Maxim, of which so much has been said, it failed entirely in this instance for the simple reason that the hill-men were quite ignorant of the death-dealing nature of the gun. When questioning men of the enemy who had faced the Maxims, it was found that they did not recognise that the rattling report was a death-summons. Many

indeed, believed it to be a kind of martial call, as harmless as that of the bugle. The rattle, which sounds more like a steam-saw at work than anything else, is not awe-inspiring. Neither would it bring much moral support to the force to which the Maxims belong. There is something in the heavy detonation of artillery which is infinitely more demoralizing to an enemy than would be the rattling reports of even a massed battery of Maxims.

As a weapon of defence, however, there is no war engine yet invented that can equal it. Whether the small-bore weapon will stop a charge of cavalry remains to be proved, but the Martini-barrelled weapon must do so, and with the range marked down, with the latter weapon it should render a cavalry charge impossible. At the long ranges at which it was used throughout the Chitral expedition, and used as an offensive weapon, the Maxim is not likely to produce any startling results. It is a fatal mistake to continue to send the Martini-barrelled machines into action unless some smokeless substitute can be found for black powder, for the weapon at once becomes an easy mark. The casualties with the Devon guns alone prove this, and both the late Captain Peebles and Lieutenant Kane reported that whenever they took their guns into action the metal parts of stand and carriage were constantly hit, the smoke from the rapid discharge making the guns an easy mark for the enemy's sharp-shooters. With the .303 bore there comes another disadvantage; in many cases its

Bullet does not stop a fighting man even when it strikes and penetrates a vital part. If this is the case, the new mark Maxim will not stop a rush of Ghazis or cavalry when charging. Thus the utility of the gun is by no means so great as was commonly supposed, in the very conditions best suited to its effective employment. But science will no doubt be able to meet the case, and to supply an ammunition which will be smokeless and equal to propelling a heavier bullet than the present .303 of the Lee-Metford invention. The conclusion, therefore, is that the Maxim is not the terrible and irresistible weapons of popular fancy, capable of mowing down myriads under any circumstances. Its value, on the contrary, is strictly circumscribed it is dependent more than almost any other war engine upon the condition under which it is brought to bear upon an enemy, although it is certainly a valuable adjunct to modern warfare. In a certain sense, as we have seen, it is a weapon of defence rather than of offence, and to be servicably accurate requires smokeless powder, fairly heavy bullet and a short range. As it was used in the Swat and Jandaul battles, it was a wasteful weapon, the amount of ammunition used being out of all proportion to the results attained.—“*Englishman*.”

#### THE LEE-METFORD RIFLE IN ACTION.

As an outcome of the Chitral Expedition we are in possession of results of exceptional value in their bearing upon the merits of the new Army weapon. The object of all European nations in recent years

has been to arm their soldiery with a rifle which will combine the qualities of efficiency and humanity in the greatest possible degree. Professional men have held the opinion that the more reduced the bore of the rifle the more humane will the weapon be in use ; and it is a fact that a small bore allows the fighting unit to carry a third more rounds of ammunition, or double the number, if the bore be sufficiently reduced. Consequently all the European Powers, during the last ten years, have been furnishing their armies with weapons of small bore, which enables the men to carry a sufficient reserve of ammunition to supply the expenditure of the magazine action that has been universally adopted. Although repeated trials of the new rifles have been made with dumb animals as marks, and though the weapon has been declared to be efficient by many experts, yet a considerable doubt still was entertained in certain military circles as to its efficiency for actual warfare. The trials upon dumb animals could give no definite idea of the actual effect which the rifle would have when required to stay the rush of armed men.

A theory has long been held by a large section of military men, that in our endeavours to minimise human suffering, we are upon the verge of sacrificing the efficiency of a fighting man's weapon, to humanity. For one of the greatest arguments in favour of the small bore was that it was humane in the wound it made ; that, while doing all that was necessary in warfare, it minimised the suffering inflicted.

Now there are two qualities in rifles which, however deep the desire after humanity may be, cannot be overlooked. The first of these qualities is the power to stop a man or horse when struck. Kill them or not as you like, but stop them you must, or your rifle is not an efficient weapon. The second, which is subordinate to the first, is that the soldier must have confidence in his weapon—must be confident that he can depend upon it to the last. Now, no amount of theory or range practice will give the result necessary to prove the efficiency of a weapon. To prove this there is nothing but actual war, and the recent fighting in the Swat and Bajour Valleys has afforded an excellent opportunity for really testing the results of the use of firearms under new conditions. Moreover, the Chitral campaign has brought out the advantage of comparison between the old and new weapons, the heavy bullet of the Martini and the light projectile of the Lee-Metford. Unfortunately no opportunity was found of testing the power of the latter weapon where exposed to cavalry; but the results which hold with infantry will also, it is to be presumed, hold with cavalry.

The statements which we are about to make are chiefly based upon the opinions of medical men formed while treating the wounded of the enemy in the Swat and Bajour Valleys between the dates of the 4th of April and 30th of the same month. The Lee-Metford, beautiful piece of mechanism as it is, errs on the side of humanity. The day after the engagements at

Malakand and Khar Kotel, wounded Swatis were met out and about, and they actually came into camp with tiny holes drilled right through them, which did not appear to cause them any serious inconvenience. Not only were these wounds through muscles and fleshy parts of the body, but bones were drilled through by the magazine bullet, and though the part was weakened, it was in no wise disabled. These are not reported to be isolated cases, but such are found to be the majority of wounds amongst the Swatis maimed in the actions above mentioned. Of course if a vital part is damaged or an artery severed, the ultimate result of the wound is the same as that of the heavier bore, but in all cases even the wounding of vital parts does not stop the assailant.

Now we had no rush at close quarters during the Chitral campaign to absolutely prove the inefficiency or efficiency of the weapon, and there is no doubt that the believers in the new weapon will still argue that the continuous stream of lead will be irresistible! This, perhaps, is true, but the "continuous stream" is practically a myth as far as taking effect is concerned. We have no doubt that if "the continuous stream" was poured into an advancing enemy the column would melt away as we have said. In theory the weapon is perfect, but in practice the "continuous stream," for the most part, passes harmlessly away over the heads of the advancing column. Until seen it is impossible to realize at what short ranges it is possible to miss, and the tendency which the best

disciplined troops show to fire high, when the moment of serious attack arrives. It is then that every bullet that strikes a man must drop him, for very few will strike and if every single one does not tell, the soldier's confidence in his weapon will go, and disaster will be the result. There is still another fault to be found with the magazine rifle : upon service it is a constant labour to the men, for if the weapon is not cleaned immediately after the use the cordite soiling takes two to three hours to clean away. This, to a man who may have to fight and march his fifteen to twenty miles a day, is a terrible trial. Moreover, in high temperatures, such as prevail in the Swat and Jandaul Valleys. at present, the ammunition has to be most carefully placed and handled for fear that it may explode. The advantages of magazine fire have not yet been called into requisition, and only once was the magazine used during the campaign as far as we can learn. This was when a company of the Bedfords was rushed by a few fanatics at Khar Kotal. The numbers of men engaged were not sufficient to prove any thing one way or the other, and in reality there was little occasion for magazine fire at all. But even then the enemy were able to advance almost to within a hundred yards before they thought better of their attack ; and as the Bedfords are a fine shooting regiment it is possible that every man of the attacking party was wounded, though most of them were able to retire. Upon the authority of the medical men and from the opinion of eye-witnesses we cannot help concluding that the Lee-Matford

does not fulfil all that the soldier has a right to expect from his weapon, and that the weapon errs on the side of humanity.—*Englishman*.

The *Times of India* publishes my interview with one of the Swat tribesmen who opposed us. The man had been wounded at Khar Kotal and he spoke thus of his wound :—

“ Yes, I was wounded at Khar Kotal !”

“ Well, tell me about it, were you at Malakand too ?”

“ Yes, I was there ; also at Swat !”

“ But I thought that you were wounded at Khar. How did you manage the Swat with a gunshot in you ?”

“ Oh ! this never hurt ; it went right through ; my leg never got stiff even. It was the child’s rifle. \* We never feared the child’s rifle, it is those devil’s instruments—the guns—that we fear. . . . . The two men from Barwa brought word from Umra Khan, words of peace, for there is little love between us of the Swat and the Jhandaul Khan. He said that with the full sanction of the Ameer of Afghanistan he had attacked and defeated the Sirkar’s armies in Chitral, that he had captured five thousand stand of rifles and much ammunition, and that he had many sahibs as prisoners in his hands. This we had heard rumoured before, but had not heard the detail. Then the men from Barwa went on to say that the Sirkar contemplated sending an army into our valleys. Then

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\* Lee-Inford.



we laughed and tightened our belts, for we were not so wise then as we are now. And the words of the Barwa men bore us up, for Umra Khan held out the hand of friendship to us, and promised men, arms and ammunition if we would stand against the common enemy. Already, they said, the Ahmed Khels, Momands, Bonerwals, Salazais, and men of Upper Swat were in arms, and the women making bullets throughout the night, while the flare of the forges prolonged the day. And then the messengers from the Mulla below talked to us, and the spirit of war took us, for there were but few of the young men that had ever seen a white man even, and the hope of killing a white man but added fuel to the flame. Thus day by day the spirit grew intenser. We heard that armies were collecting beyond Jellala, but the Mullas preached, and the tribesmen poured into help us; men came from below also, and we were confident that Allah had given another Kaffir Army into our hands, just as the one that had been swallowed up in the days of our grandfathers in the Khyber. For the old men assured us that no army could face us and climb either Shahkot, or Malakand, and that the Kaffir Army would be without horses and without cannon; and without these the white men were useless. And all this we believed. Mustapha Khan was our leader, who and what he was, or where he came from, I do not know, but he was a tall man with a long beard: he was killed at Malakand. And we were well informed as to the movements of the white army, for our men came up

the passes daily, and our villages were full of armed men, and Mustapha Khan divided us, and half went to Malakand and built *sangars*, the others went to Shahkot, and a few went to Morah. And the Sirkar deceived us, for they made a show at Pali before Shahkot, and then in the rain they collected their armies at the mouth of the Malakand gorge and this is why we were beaten, because if the men at Shahkot had been with us at Malakand we should have been ten thousand strong, with two to three thousand rifles, and then the devil guns even could not have driven us out.

"We expected that the attack would have been made on the day of the rain. At least, that is what the spies said, and the night of the rain we all slept at our places. On the morning of the fight (3rd) a party of Ahmed Khels came in, also some men who said that there had been a fight at Shahkot, and that the Kafirs had been beaten off. This gave us great heart though it was a false report. I was with a party of Aladand and Malakand villagers in a *sangar* to the right of the Pass. And in the morning the first of the enemy that we saw were sowars (Guides advanced guard). The Khar men, who were on the high hill and its Kotal first fired at them. A sepoy who was with us, and who had served the Sirkar, said that the sowars and Guides Pultan were Pathans, and that they would all come over to our side as soon as firing commenced. This made us all very keen to begin the fight and confident of the result; but just before the devil

guns opened fire, men went round to all the *sangars* telling those with rifles to escape early from the field if success was not ours, as we could not afford to lose rifles. We laughed at them, for after the words of the sepoy, we believed that the Kaffir army was given into our hand. Then the guns opened at the Khar men, who were aided by some Ahmed Khels. We could see the shots (shells) going harmlessly over the top of the big hill, and we laughed more. Then men began to climb the hill (Guides and 4th Sikhs), and presently we heard the rattle-gun (Maxim). Then it was our turn, for the enemy began to stream up the valley, and the guns moved up nearer. We were still laughing, when a shot fell in the *sangars*, directly above us, and burst into pieces, splintering the rocks into a thousand missiles. Two men of our village came down with terror written on their faces." 'It is magic!' they said. We climbed up and saw seven men had been killed by that one shot. And for the first time we thought in earnest of saving the rifles. But a Mulla came down and cheered us on. We began to fire at long range and found our courage again in the smoke from our rifles. But the devil guns were terrific, and they came up close beneath us. Their shots buried themselves in the ground, and threw the mud and stones in showers over us, so that none escaped, for the thrown up stones were as deadly as the shots themselves. Then there was a cry that men were coming up the hill. We could not see them for some time, but when we did see them, we had lost most of our

confidence, because we never knew when they fired for there was no smoke. We made up our minds to save the rifles ; but we waited until the Kaffirs were close, because we could climb and fly twice as quickly as they. Their bullets, though, hit many of us but the wounds were slight, many not even knowing that they had been hit. We knew that the men had lied who said that the Kaffirs could never climb the hills and that the sepoy had lied about the Pathans, for we had heard them fighting on the right. So we just saved our rifles, and the Kaffirs pursued us until it was nightfall.

They had done a good day's work, for they must have killed a hundred with their devil guns, and many amongst us were wounded.

"And in the morning the men from Shakhkot came in a large body, and they were very angry at being duped and they jeered us for our defeat, so much so that at one time we nearly fell upon each other. Then one Saheb Shah, a Momand, marshalled us, and some men from Bonair having arrived, we crowned the hills above Khar and waited, and towards evening the head of the Kaffir Army arrived. And the men of Shakhkot were full of war and they charged down upon the Kaffirs, but they had allowed the latter (the Dogras) to gain the summits of the lower hills, and we could not pierce their line, though our men often died on their bayonets. And we fought hard, because the Mullas urged us to defeat the Kaffirs before the devil guns could be brought over the Pass. And they told us to

give us heart, that the guns could not be brought over for days. But it was false ; for presently we heard the deep sound of these guns, and from them there was no safety, no cover. But the Mullas urged us on, and so about three hundred of us determined to rush the guns, for they alone made us cowards. But we met many Kaffirs on the side of the hill whom we had not seen, for they fired without making smoke, and we were so close to them that we could not escape being wounded but their fire killed few, though it was very rapid and many of us that escaped into the *nullah* believed we were unwounded until we found blood on our clothes. We were more or less all wounded. I got this (pointing to his thigh), but only a few were badly hurt. This did not stop us fighting still. But the Kaffirs stood still, and we could not make it out. They made no attempt to drive us from our position. Then the Mullas said that they were afraid and that the day was ours. So a great party came down the hill into the plain, or we were full of the belief that the Kaffirs were afraid. And suddenly there was a shout, and the Kaffir horsemen were upon us. Now we knew nothing of horsemen, and we never believed that they could come up the Malakand with big horses. And with one accord we fled—some to the hills, others to Badkhel, and others into the *nullahs*. But the horsemen killed a few, and but for the softness of the ground they would have killed many. And it was night. And the Mullahs said ‘ the river is rising, let us go to the other side of the river, then they will

never pass.' Some said, ' let us attack them at night. But we were beaten, we had about two hundred dead upon the ridge. We feared the horses and the guns, and we went to Tanna that night. Most men had lied. My wound was sore, but I was able to walk, and it was only a little stiff, as it had not bled much.

At Tanna there was little spirit, for we of Swat lost heart when we saw the smoke of Khar ascending to the sky. But I was with the fighting men, and we crossed over into the Khan's country, and the next day Mahomed Shah came from Mandia with horsemen and promises of help from Momandland and the Bonerwals, and the river was rising, so we again took heart. But it was momentary, for we were beaten. We were beaten at Khar, and after Khar we of Swat had no more fight in us. Of the others I do not know. But I hear that Umra Khan is a prisoner, which is good. My wound ? it was well in a week."

This is almost word for word the history of the Swat valley fighting—an enemy's version. In its way it is an important account, as it shows vividly that Magazine rifles have not minimized the moral effect of Artillery ; that a forward policy alone is successful against these tribesmen ; that the concentration at Dargai was a grand piece of generalship by Sir Robert Low, and that it saved us great loss of life ; that the Lee-Metford is not the weapon it should be ; and that the enemy's casualties have been greatly overrated.

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